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THE ADMIRAL'S CHAIR



THE ADMIRAL'S CHAIR

AND OTHER SKETCHES AND VIGNETTES

BY

J. E. G. DE MONTMORENCY

Doth not the sun rise smiling
When fair at even he sets?

HUMPHREY MILFORD

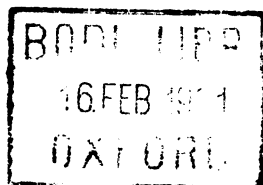
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1921

TO

MY WIFE



PREFATORY NOTE

THIS little book is a sequel to *The Never Ending Road* and *The White Riders*. There seems to be some demand for suggestions cast in the form adopted here, and I have therefore ventured to make some further selections from various publications of mine which have seen the light during and since the war. In many cases these vignettes are both rural and didactic. I am not a believer in art for art's sake, and my art, such as it is, may be regarded as of a strictly practical character.

I have to thank the proprietors of the *Contemporary Review* for permission to reprint the longer sketches. The last four vignettes appeared in *The Times*, and I have to thank the proprietors of that journal for leave to place them here. The sketch *At the Twurning ov the Road* appeared originally in *The Clarion*, and was later printed in *The Somerset Year-book* (No. XVII.). I have to thank the proprietors of these publications for leave to place this little experiment in a dialect that I love among the other sketches. I am grateful to Mr. Charles Williams and to my old friend Mr. Hubert Ord for reading the proofs and saving me from some of the results of my personal equation of error.

J. E. G. DE M.

LINCOLN'S INN,
October 13, 1920.



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THE ADMIRAL'S CHAIR

THE great, ramshackle, sea-coast inn was full of animation on that September evening. It had been a great day since the sea-monster, the giant German submarine, which had for weeks haunted the bay and had preyed upon the fishing-boats and other helpless craft, had been slain and lay full of dead pirates in the shallows by the Point. The long inn parlour was crowded with excited but very happy fishermen, and the tale of the pirate's end was told again and again from endless points of view in vernacular as soft as it was triumphant, told and retold till at last there was nothing more to tell, and that silence which angels break fell upon the fisher-folk. And the angel on this occasion proved to be the innkeeper, a short, sturdy man out of Devon, with a little peaked beard, reddish-brown touched with grey, and round, bright blue eyes. A strange-looking man he was, a man who might have come straight off the *Golden Hind* on which his ancestor sailed round the world, a man known for his fearlessness, his fierceness in moments of action, his invariable softness of speech. He was, in a sense, in these times merely a nominal landlord ; as a man of action there was much for him to do in such times on such a coast, and his fishing-boat bore other things than fish to land. But the part that he played and his wonderful fashion of playing it for the nonce are hidden away, though his diary—for he is a methodical man, this descendant of the

shipmate of Francis Drake—will make no mean footnote to the records of war. Meantime there he was, a sailorman among sailormen, sitting in his great chair at the head of a long trestle-table, and looking from time to time out of the broad window into the quiet bay and at the far-off moonlit Point where the dead sea-monster sucked in the sands of the ragged tides. The rough trestle-table was certainly out of keeping with the magnificent carved chair set on a little platform in which he sat. Though its splendours were faded and the embossed furnishing worn and stained, yet time had, if anything, added dignity to the chair. The gold still lay in the patterned Spanish leather, save on the curved arm-rests that end in crowned eagles' heads. The chair, if looked at by a curious eye, gave a sense of regality, and it was evidently built for a man great in thews as well as birth. The depth of the chair, as well as the incurved back surrounding the purple cushioning, showed that. Above the back was faded but splendid blazoning of arms with a legend below and an eagle crest above the arms. The nature of the wood puzzled the experts; it was hard and heavy as iron with something of the tint of mahogany, but lighter, as the grain of the great curved legs ending in huge bird-claws showed.

The landlord sat in his chair, one arm resting on the side, the hand playing with his beard, as he looked out on the Point with wide, dreamy eyes. The sailormen sat drinking their beer below him and smoking much tobacco in great content. Their chief, for so they regarded him, was watching the dead foe. That they knew, and were content to smoke in silence. Then he said, in a far-off sort of way: 'This chair I am sitting in was my father's chair, grandfather's chair, a steersman at Aboukir

Bay, his father's chair, the man who sailed with Hood. It goes back—how far does it go back, John Line?' 'It goes back,' said the white-bearded sailor, 'to the fight against the Dutch, the day of fine, clean, bloody fighting.' 'Yes,' said James Port, the landlord, 'that is true, but it goes back further than that. Do none of you know the history of this chair? Yes, William; it do go back to the days of Old Queen Bess, and further. But the history of it? Come, some of you old fellows know and can't say. Let me tell it over again,' and he called for candle-lights on the long table, and spoke from the shadows of the chair while the rays of the rising moon struck along the table and showed him as he sat, half-showed, half-hid him with elusive light. As he spoke he seemed like one speaking out of the far-off age of the desperate battles that he was recalling. And his audience, with their bearded faces, turned towards him in the candle-light, looked as if they too had come up from the Age of the Armada, and as if this were some great, stately cabin of a mighty galleon, a treasure-ship homeward bound from the Spanish Main. Such were the illusions of the mingled light and of the great Spanish Chair of State. 'The man who won this chair, the Admiral's Chair, was James Port—same as I am James Port. Hold up a candle to the picture at the back of me, William, up there by the rafters.' Two of the younger men took candles and stools and stood behind the landlord and showed the picture.

There sat a man in this veritable chair, a Spanish grandee bearing the insignia of his rank as Admiral, a mighty man whose ringed right hand crossed his body and clasped a sword-hilt. The pale face with the tiny beard and moustache was what struck the company. The eyes were closed. It was a dead

man who sat, hand on hilt, in the great chair. A wonderful painter must have limned that picture, for one expected the dead man to open his eyes, to draw his rapier. 'That,' said James Port, 'that is how he came ashore, bobbing in the waves. We buried him in the old church, the Admiral of the Chair. He came ashore at the Point, bobbing in the waves just where the U-boat lies. Look at the picture; do you see, he is tied in the chair. The rope is now in the drawer under the chair, the rope and fifty pieces of eight. Here, bring out the drawer, William,' and he handed the man a curiously worked short key. Then he leant back, and the sailormen looked first at the Admiral in the Chair above and then at James Port in the chair beneath. And one of them thought that the Admiral's eyes opened and that he drew his sword a little space. Then the men came down from the stools that they had stood on, and all crowded round James Port to look at the drawer with its long silken rope and dozens of corroded gold coins and the little miniature, perhaps from the Spanish Netherlands, possibly from the brush of the younger Holbein, of a young Spanish beauty. 'His wife,' said James Port. 'I knew her well.' 'You?' 'Well, James Port. Let me tell my story as though I were that James Port.

'We do not know what heat is, here in our England—that is, home dwellers. But we all, I think, shipmates, we all here have been on the Line and in the swelters of the Spanish Main. 'Twas in September of 1580—was it?—that I first saw the Admiral. It had been a wild year. Many of us English had been privateering down in the Main, harrying the ships of the Spanish King. Most were sailing under English captains, but I had drifted away and joined what was neither more nor less—to be frank, shipmates—than

a pirate fleet, manned with desperadoes, half-castes of every land under heaven. Our Admiral, the king of our little island where we lay *perdus* and shared and buried treasure and refitted and drank like water the rarest wines of France and Spain and gambled our wealth—a bit of it is in that drawer there—our Admiral was, of all nationalities conceivable, a Spaniard, a great man under a shadow, banished, for a heretic marriage, by the Inquisition from Madrid. Enemy though he was, few braver seamen, I say, sailed the seas; an explorer, a man of thought and knowledge, a man of infinite humour and tenderness, of iron will and fierce determination. When he fled out of Vigo, the loveliest harbour of the West, his wife went with him, and they sped south-west in the largest, swiftest corsair that the yards of Tunis ever built. He had picked his crew, and no such pirate ever before sailed the seas. His fame grew, though who he was no man knew; but soon a fleet was under his command, and he took tribute from his cousin the King of Spain. The English he avoided. Ferox fights not with ferox, but such was his fame that some of us drifted into his command, and rightly so, for was not his sword against the Spanish power? Look at him again. He was a king among men.'

Once more the candles were held up against the portrait in the rafters, and the wonderful pale face with the mighty brow shone out. Surely his eyes were open now, surely the rapier was loosening from the hilt, surely a smile was breaking over that inscrutable face. 'I knew,' went on James Port, sitting easily in the Admiral's Chair, 'I knew the trade routes and the seaways in and out the islands as few men know them, and so the Admiral sent for me. He always picked his men. I saw him first sitting in this very chair in the great cabin on a September evening.

And the Duchess sat by him, a flower among the flowers she had gathered that day to grace this adventure. Easily in English he spoke and praised our people—spoke of Grenville as a brother, of Drake as a master. "If I had but Drake and Hawkins under my command we would conquer Spain and make the two great sea-people kin. Is it possible?" "They only serve the Queen," I said. "But you are serving me!" "Only so long as you are serving the Queen." "Nay, I am serving Spain—the real Spain," he said, with a smile, and, turning to the Catalonian beside him, added, in Spanish, with a tenderness belonging rather to the soul than to words, "This is the only queen I serve." And so we set to work at the charts, and soon I found that he was my master in this as in all else. Thus the Admiral shared with the English the abundant treasures of the Spanish Main, and in many a stern sea-fight I fought behind him, his bodyguard, though perhaps he knew it not, as he led the desperate boarding-parties that swept the galleons of Spain. Once he met Hawkins. It was in this fashion. A galleon out of the Port of Spain lay becalmed on a breathless moonlit night. We sighted her, and our boats were out with muffled oars, creeping towards the prey. Suddenly we heard the splash of unmuffled oars, and realised that an English boarding-party were swooping in the night. It was a race for the richest treasure galleon of the year. Both parties boarded at the same moment, and the Spanish troops, smitten at once on both sides, surrendered after a brief, bloody struggle. A pile of dead men lay between the Admiral's men and Hawkins's men. The Admiral leapt across the barrier, rapier in hand, and saluted the English captain in the moonlight. "Is it peace," he said, "or shall we fight it out, Captain Hawkins?" Hawkins

cautiously stroked his beard, and then, wiping his bloody sword on his left hand, said, "If we fight we lose all, for the King of Spain's men are many. We will share alike." "Nay, since *you* grant that, I grant all," said the Spaniard, with lofty condescension. "I claim nothing save one grasp of the hand of a great sailor. But we shall meet one day again," and he withdrew his men and left the ship to the Englishman. But the Englishman, not to be outdone, took from his neck a gem that would have made a king's ransom. "Give this to one whom you love," he said. And the Duchess wore it till her death. It shines still in the little picture.'

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'When the Duchess died, a change came over the Admiral. He did not weep for her, but death was his bourne, for sorrowfully he needed to meet her again. He dispersed his fleet, buried his treasure by the secret spot where the ashes of his only treasure lay, and set out for Europe to offer the King of Spain his sword. "James Port," he said to me, "no man ever had more faithful servant than you have been, but here we part; from to-morrow we are enemies. But two things I give you, if fortune and time permit: one is my chair, which, after these present wars, I will have sent to you, and the other is this chart of my treasures on a certain headland watching the east from Florida. These I shall never need, since my treasure is in heaven. The chair you shall have, and I foresee that the treasure will come to some seed of thine." And with the chart he gave me a ring that the Duchess had worn; for, said he, "you served her well."

'So we parted. It was the spring of 1588, and, forgiven or unforgiven by the Inquisition, he placed

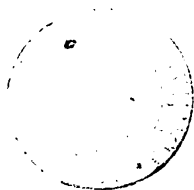
his ship at the disposal of the King; and, captain of the old Barbary corsair, but no longer with his faithful crew, he joined the Armada. The Inquisition never forgives, the Church of Rome in Spain has a long memory. And so it happened that I saw him once again. In a sense he met Hawkins too, but never crossed swords with him. The Inquisition did its work in sight of the Spanish King's enemies. Its men seized the finest sailor, the best commander in Medina's fleet, and, binding him into this royal chair with a silken rope, hurled him with it into the Channel tides. The Inquisition sheds no blood, and the dead man drifted ashore, bobbing in the tides at yonder Point, while Hawkins's guns were riddling the dead man's ship. I hear them now!

And James Port gazed dreamily out to the Point where he had seen the Admiral come drifting in, the Point where the Admiral's ship was wrecked, the Point where the German sea-monster lay choking in the shifting sands. 'I hear them now!' As he spoke, the moonlight, breaking through a scudding cloud, fell full on the Admiral's face. The eyes were open and flashing, the mouth seemed to be speaking sudden, crisp orders, the rapier was half from its sheath. And James Port said, for the third time, 'I hear them now!' Even as he finished, the sound of guns at sea came booming in through the quiet September night, and flash after flash cut the horizon like lightning. 'Man the life-boat, my men!' cried James Port, leaping from his chair, 'the only game's afoot'; and, like unleashed hounds of war, the company, a moment ago listening like children, took the gleaming great sea-road.

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The moonlight faded from the picture, but the

great chair, dimly lighted by the last candle, was not empty. A man sat there, sat as if it were his wont. His head was resting on his left inturned hand, his eyes were watching the Point and the flashing of the guns. By him, leaning on the opposite chair-arm to that on which his arm rested, was a woman who gazed, not at the Point, but at the rapt, wonderful face of the Admiral of the Chair. The real Spain was awakening, the old Spain of chivalry that smote the heathen and the Hun, the Spain of which Cervantes dreamed. And the woman, that flower among the flowers, laid her hand upon his, she who was his treasure, as the last earthly candle faded away.



THE CAVERNS OF ELEUTHERA

It was a fierce October evening, and the life-boat had, after a desperate journey, successfully answered the flares of a fishing-smack broken on that wild, rocky coast. The crew, one and all, were saved, and there were no other ships, from that little port, at any rate, fighting for life. So, after the great, deep-bellied life-boat had been run ashore, hauled up the beach, and, with infinite labour of straining tackle, comfortably put to bed amid the angry shouting of the gale and the revisitings of a scudding moon, James Port returned with a pleased mind to his inn, the 'Black Sea Dog.' He slipped through the long inn parlour, where fishing-folk were already gathering, and, passing the Admiral's Chair, opened a little door, climbed an old winding oak stair-case, and entered a long sitting-room above the inn parlour, panelled throughout, where his wife and daughters sat. But his two boys, fourteen and fifteen, had been first with the news, and were already telling the tale of rescue with flashing eyes and excited gestures. James Port laughed at the lamp-lit scene, and, as he went off to change his dripping clothes, said, 'I will show you how to tell a story after supper.' 'What story?' shouted the boys eagerly and together. 'Pieces of Eight,' said the blue-eyed father, as he squeezed the wet out of his beard; 'I will bring down the Iron Box.' 'Such a story for boys!' said his wife, as her husband vanished; 'and for girls too,' she added, as she and the girls rose and

all hands were piped for the pleasing task of getting ready a multitudinous supper of bacon and eggs, fried chips and bread on this auspicious evening of roaring October, when the gale was flinging itself in vain against the old Elizabethan inn, and at the most drove white turf-smoke curling round the panelled walls as it had curled for three centuries and more.

At last the appetite of the Port family, silently exercised with a vigour worthy of the race, was appeased and the work of clearing away was performed with celerity in view of the promised tale. But, as the family settled round the fire and James Port was unlocking a small Iron Box which he had placed on the round table, there was a feeble knocking at the door, hardly at first noticeable through the gusts of the gale. The sound startled the children, and even made placid Mrs. Port look up; and when the knock was repeated in a quavering fashion James Port called out, 'Come in!' The door slowly opened, and a very old, white-bearded sailor peered in. 'Come in, Nicholas Game,' said the landlord heartily, but with a curious look, as though a coincidence had happened, 'come in and join us.'

'I felt a call, Cap'n, to zee 'ee this evening, the thirteenth o' October. Do 'ee mind the date?' said the old sailor as he came up the room, much as though it were the deck, balancing himself as he walked and feeling out on either side. 'Sit thee; sit thee here,' said James Port imperatively. 'Do I mind the date? Why, in the bustle of the war I had forgotten; but, words o' wonder, it be the date. My word, Nicholas! the thirteenth of October, the day we saw IT with these very eyes.' 'Saw what?' said the boys breathlessly; and the girls listened, chins on hands, while their feet were toasting at the turf-fire. 'Your fortune, my fortune, our fortune

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—thousands and thousands and thousands o' pieces o' eight and diamonds and rubies, and IT.' 'Yes,' quavered the old man, fumbling for his pipe, 'IT.' And the wind roared and raved as he spoke the word. 'I take it, Cap'n, that you be, in a manner o' speaking, the richest man i' the world.' 'Yes,' said James Port, 'I do suppose I be.' 'Oh, do tell us all,' cried the boys. 'Let us open the Iron Chest first,' said he, and the lock clicked and he turned back the heavy top.

'Be the Admiral's Chart there, Cap'n?' 'It be, or should be. Let us see. Here is Captain Hawkins's gem, which the Duchess wore.' Even as he spoke the jewels blazed in the light of the lamp, the glory of the regalia of some Aztec queen. The old sailor shuffled towards the door and locked it, muttering the while in the bastard Spanish of the Main. 'And here are the three stories of the great Search. How we used them, Nicholas, that year!' 'Wonderful true they were,' muttered the old man; 'but where be the chart? I be come to ask.' And as he spoke Nicholas Game seemed suddenly a sterner, younger man, with a keen outlook under his bushy brows. 'It be thy trust.' James Port did not reply, but searched busily among the various papers in the box. The chart was not there. 'I have not opened the box since the war began, nor indeed thought of it, but the key has never left me. This is the third loss since the Black Man brought it in 1588. What shall we do?' While speaking he never showed the least tremor of vexation, though the loss was immeasurable. It was an emergency to be faced, an event in a great game. 'There must be another key. The chart may have been gone for four years, and the treasure too. What do you think, Nicholas?' 'I know,' said the old man grimly, 'where the chart

and the key were a week ago—out at sea. I know where they were at dawn to-day. On a dead body on this coast washed up by the tide. I saw the body, searched the body. Here they be. Keep better watch, Cap'n.' And the old man put a little oilskin case of ancient shape and a rusty key on the table. James Port's eyes flashed. There was something more than chance in this. It was the hand of the Admiral, he thought, or of the Duchess, for he was not less superstitious than his kind, and perhaps with more cause. 'What sort of a corpse were it, Nicholas?' he said, lighting his pipe and resting his elbow on the chart. 'It were the Black Man again, the very man that these stories tell of, the man this inn be named after, the high-cheeked man with straight black hair. I dragged the body down to low-water mark in the wind and storm at daybreak. We want no 'quests.' 'But, father,' broke in the elder boy, 'he was a real man, and can't be the man these old writings tell of. He were here the night you told o' the Admiral's Chair, the day the U-boat were sunk. He sat in the bar that evening and drank spirits. I know, because he paid in bad foreign money that William took for English in the dusk. You kept the odd coin, mother.' 'So I did,' said she, 'here it is.' They all bent together in the lamplight, looking at the coin. It was a blanco of the days of Philip II. Nicholas and James Port looked at each other with knit brows. 'Well, any way, he's dead,' said Port; 'yet I wish he were buried.' 'But the story you promised, father,' said the younger boy, who did not connect the visitor with the story. And James Port laughed in his cheeriest way and said, 'Well, here it is,' and, taking the box on his knees, began, with a boy sitting beside each leg and looking up at him, while old Nicholas

sat in the group of mother and two daughters on the other side of the great open hearth.

'My stories come in jumps, boys, and I can't stop to say whether the man in the story is James Port who sailed with Drake, or James Port who fought the Dutch, or James Port who sailed with Hood, or this James Port who sits here. The only James Port who it isn't as yet is you, my boy.' And he looked down on the sunny face on his left side. 'Well, scene number one : James Port sitting in his new Inn, which then they called "The Rose," a week or two after the Armada fight. It were an autumn evening, and the drawer (man like William) he called me and said a black man wanted to see me, and so I went down and saw he. He were a strange-looking man, but I knew him in a minute. It was the Admiral's servant, come ashore somehow from the wreck. He smiled when he saw me and said in Spanish, or rather the lingo of the Spanish Main, "This from his late Highness," and gave me this very Iron Box. I offered to reward him and feast him, but he coldly put aside my offers and added : "It was my master's last order. I have done it. I have no master now. I fight for my own hand. Some day, somehow, I will have the chart." I turned away for a moment thinking someone called, and when I looked again he were gone, and nowhere to go to.' 'He were a ghost, I think,' said the younger boy. 'He were the devil, I am certain,' said old Nicholas. 'He were a man right enough, I knew him,' said James Port. 'Now I will read out o' the first written story,' and he took out of the box a faded manuscript in a crabbed Elizabethan hand which he was able, after years of handling and consultation, to read. It was brief, and ran thus :

'This is the Relation of the finding of the Admiral's

Treasure under the head-hills of Eleuthera, off the shores of Florida. For seven years after the coming of the Black Man with the chart I waited opportunity to find the way laid down to that secret place. In the year of our Lord 1595, being the 28 of August, I hoisted sail in the company of Admiral Drake, he being bound for Nombre de Dios and Porto Bello, where he died, rich in the great honour he had achieved, greatly bewailed by his own nation and country, and a star unto posterity. But I did part from him at Porto Rico, having many fair words from him who had been my Admiral in other years, and, speeding north-west, cast anchor in the horned bay of the haunted isle of Eleuthera on the Eve of Christmas, 1595. The chart showed that this was the bay, and that in the south part of the bay, where the cliffs look north-north-west, the treasure lies. Our Indian pilot, Topiawari, brought our barge into a sandy beach where a freshet of water runs down from the rocks, and there we bade him wait while we climbed to come to the tops of the coral hills, where we supposed the search would end. From that height we saw faint lands south, west, and north, and beneath us the bay and our ship riding there, and round us was fair country and singing birds and herons and cranes of many colours were standing in the stream. The chart bade us seek "The Great Crane," and presently we sighted a rock of that shape with the bill plucking, as it were, fish from the earth. And beneath the Crane on the Chart were the figures 153, which were a fitting parable, and happily in God's Providence did mislead the Black Man.'

James Port stopped. The manuscript was ended. 'The rest of the story has been told from father to son, but that will come next. Enough to say now that a pestilence struck the ship's company, an

unknown sickness whereby all strength was taken from them, marked by swollen legs, shrunk, blackened sinews, and aching teeth. Many died, and but four sound men brought the ship home. But James Port and Nicholas Game saw and handled the treasure that lies in the caverns of Eleuthera, and saw there, too, the crystal coffer where the Duchess sleeps, ever lit by some secret light from above, and ever sung by the sound of falling waters.

‘The next search was toward the end of the days of the Buccaneers in the Caribbean Sea. Here is something of the story of James Port, the most desperate of us all, who sailed with Morgan and was in the great fight at Panama in 1671. It is a fine story, but too long to read to-night,’ and the speaker laid his hand on a thick stained yellow MS., ‘the story of James Port fighting for his own hand down in the Bahamas, carrying letters of marque from King Charles, King James, and King William, and carrying, too, this Chart. Eleuthera was his headquarters. There he fitted and refitted for his cruises in the Caribbean from Barbados to the Isle of Pines, and many a bloody fight he fought under Morgan, Grammont, Hamelin, and Ducasse. Yet none suspected the secret of his northern isle, of the great revolving rock under the Crane’s Bill, of the winding stairway in the bowels of the earth, of the long, echoing pillared hall carved out by a falling river where the great treasure-chests are stored, sealed to this day with the seal of the old Admiral. But there was never a chance of shipping the treasure, of that he and his Nicholas Game were certain, and after 1718 he sped home, and in this house wrote his record and died in peace.’ ‘But is it there still?’ said the elder boy, with the old hunger of his race shining in his eyes. ‘Certain it be, though thrice in

these two hundred years the chart were stolen,' said the old man, holding out his hands to the fire, and turning his head as the storm without battered the house. 'Go on with the story, Nicholas,' said James Port, closing the box and putting the keys in his pocket.

'Cap'n and I talked for years of a third search. The story o' the search be in that box. A safe ship, a safe crew, safe journeys—that was what we wanted. Some o' the crew be singing beneath us now—hearken!—but many be dead. The old ship lies fathoms deep off Caicos Island, but here we be.' 'Here be we, Nicholas,' said James Port cheerily. 'Dost remember, Cap'n, how we found the Crane, how we pushed the Bill and set the great rock swinging, how we went down, down, down, well fitted wi' lights and flares, how we came down on the sandy floor o' the hall and reckoned the treasure-chests, one hundred and fifty and three, and stood beside the crystal coffer where She lies, and wondered where the light came from and the falling o' the waters? Dost remember the figure that came and stood in the light, a thing like the idol o' Baal, the thunder of his voice, the crash o' the rock above as it closed, and the echoes like rolling thunder?' The old sailor, as he spoke, looked in the firelight like a creature of another world. 'It were a tight corner; we were prisoners right enough,' said James Port, and as he spoke he felt a boy on each side grip his leg. 'But here we be,' he said cheerily. 'Two days and two nights we spent in Treasure Cave.' 'How did you get out?' cried the trembling boys. 'The way the Black Man got in, by the rock chimney where the light and the water flowed in. 'Twas a fearful climb, and ever behind us the Black Man crept, with hand ready to clutch us by the feet and drag us back to death.' 'At the

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last turn I jammed my bowie in his chest, and I heard the corpse bouncing from rock to rock and thud on the sand below,' said the old man, re-hearing the dreadful sound, re-living a supreme moment.

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The silence of the party as they sat over the fire thinking of the perils and treasures galore was broken by an echoing sea chanty from the parlour below.

'To Caicos from Eleuthera be nigh a hundred leagues
Of hurricane and hungry tides that every pirate knows,
Where biting rock and lurking shark hold ships in their
intrigues :
There deep among the coral lies the ship we called the
Rose.'

'Was that your ship, father?' said the boys.
'Yes,' said he. 'What shall we call ours?' said they. '*The Admiral and the Duchess,*' said he. 'We will bring all the money home for mother,' said James Port, the youngest, 'but Nicholas must come with us.' And the wind of October, roaring round the inn, swept the Black Man into the stream of waters that flow to the Gulf where the Duchess sleeps in the cavern of sea-reaped treasures.

THE LOOKING-GLASS OF TIME

THE little seaside town had disgorged its army of visitors and was slowly relapsing into its sixteenth-century sleep. Serene September had gone, and man had returned to his labours in the great towns. First they departed in battalions, then in squads, and at last one by one until there was but a solitary visitor left to face the short evenings and possibly blustering days of chill October. He was a curious-looking man, who might well have belonged to that earlier century which dominated the town when profitable visitors had gone. The visitors came to the town to see the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but these eluded them while giving them the cold framework of a dead age. They could look at the buildings and the rich brown brick walls with the creeping lichen, but they were of the twentieth century, and to them the little town was a museum with a pleasant front to a warm southern sea. But it was not so with the remaining visitor. He was of the age that the town affected from October onwards, and, lodging as he did at the 'Black Sea Dog,' that admirable hostelry where James Port held rule, he seemed hardly a visitor, but rather an adopted son of the town, one who might, if he would, have access to and even sit in the Admiral's Chair at the end of the long inn parlour under the ancient portrait of the Admiral who had ruled the Spanish Main. All the summer he had stayed at the inn, and had become almost part of the family, a stately Elizabethan-looking man

with trim auburn beard and clear shrewd eyes beneath a noble brow, but a taller man than James Port and more authoritative. He knew all the family stories, while even the secrets of the gold in the caverns of Eleuthera were his, and he and James Port often talked of the days after the war, the days now near at hand, when they together would sail to the isle where the Admiral's treasure lay hidden. James Port, usually keen and suspicious about strangers, had no suspicions of this man, come whence no one knew and on business that no one guessed nor tried to guess. He seemed almost to treat James Port as though the landlord had served under him in other days, and it is certain that Port treated his visitor with a respect that betokened some secret affinity and sense of duty and service. There was something about the stranger that made the face familiar to everyone, and yet no one guessed why it was familiar. He was as much at home with the fishermen who were the life-boat men and sat of an evening in the long candle-lit parlour, as he was with James Port; but there was always, even in his familiarity and close knowledge of their seamanship and their lives, something that placed him at the high table of life, the little something that set him apart, while the men felt drawn to his smiling and yet austere personality. So the last visitor lingered on into the chill but wonderful month of October.

'Three times since 1718 have the chart and key been stolen, and each time the Black Man has left something in their place.' James Port was speaking once again of the old quest to the family party in the long panelled room above the inn parlour where the fishermen were chanting under the shadow of the Admiral's Chair. There were the boys and girls and Mrs. Port and old Nicholas Game. The only addi-

tion was the stranger who had so strangely entered into their confidence. 'But did he leave anything last year beside the foreign money, the old blanco?' said the elder boy. 'We did not know it at the time but I found it soon after. He carried it in on that stormy night, just such a night as this, and left it behind the Admiral's Chair, a long flat thing wrapped in matting that had been round it, I should say, for untold years, so mildewed and rotten it was. I have saved it against this night, this thirteenth of October, that we might open it together. You are here, friend, on a strange occasion.' 'Yes,' said the visitor, 'it is a strange story. I seem somehow to know it all as if I had sailed with the Admiral and your ancestor. But come, let us see the treasure.' 'Fetch it, Nicholas,' said Port; 'it is probably nothing at all. It felt like a wooden thing.' The wind was calling as Nicholas Game hobbled out of the room, calling like a voice from the infinite deeps of time. 'The sound of the wind seems to awaken memories in me,' said the stranger. 'I am sure that my ancestor sailed with yours, my friend. I have family stories, too, and they are full of memories of the Main, and one or two relics have come down. Look at this miniature.' They looked at the loveliest face ever limned by man. 'Who was it? Who painted it?' asked Mrs. Port. 'I do not know that I can tell. It is said to be an ancestress of mine. But here is Nicholas with his mystery.' The old man almost stumbled with his mouldy load of matting, a long, oblong thing. And the wind moaned and the sea broke under the fitful moon.

'I will open it,' said James Port, 'but I have no expectations of anything beautiful or useful. The Black Man intended nothing for us. It was some flotsam he found too heavy to carry farther. But

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let us see.' The packing was not easily cut away. Not one wrapping but many hid the secret, and as it was torn and hacked away the smell of lost ages, of hidden things belonging to other generations, filled the room. The men smoked in something like tension. The girls and their mother sniffed with curiosity, with affected repulsion. Soon the last coating of fibre, plainly from Southern isles, was reached and swiftly torn away to reveal a great mirror, untarnished, in a costly framework that recalled the great chair below, and bearing beyond doubt the Admiral's arms. James Port smote his forehead, the stranger looked puzzled, and his eyes, fixed on the seaward window, seemed to search the secrets of the backward of time. 'There is something about this mirror in some of the writings in the chest. Shall we open the chest? You have not seen the Iron Chest, my friend. Here it is. It be safely kept now, Nicholas,' he added with a smile, as they recalled the fright of last year. 'While you are looking out the old story shall I put the mirror up where we can see it at its best?' said the visitor. 'Do,' said Mrs. Port, and the tall man carried the great looking-glass to a place on the wall opposite the sea-window. There he and Nicholas fixed it, while James Port and the others searched in the old MSS. for its history. 'Here it is,' cried James Port the youngest; 'this is what was written by someone: "There did hang in sight of the great carved chair a looking-glass framed curiously, and therein did the Admiral look when he did take his ease, for, said he, this is the remembrancer of time, the recorder of things good and evil. And men said that he beheld therein the visions of things fulfilled."' The visitor listened, a look of wrapt attention filling his luminous eyes. 'Let us see,' said he, 'if there is any legend

inscribed anywhere on this strange piece of furniture.' He closely scanned the old frame, and presently he gave a start, for he had found on the top, in the place beneath the carved arms, some Latin words, evidently a legend. He puzzled and at length made out the lines :

'Sum speculum : quic quid coram me fecerit ætas
Servo ; scrutanti cernere cuncta datur.'

The Port family and old Nicholas Game listened to the strange rhythm. 'The owd Spanish, I suppose,' said Nicholas. 'Yes, in a way,' said the visitor. 'It is early Latin. Are there any rhymes in the book about the mirror? Look, James, my boy.' The boy looked eagerly and at last found it. 'Is this it?

'Time's Looking Glass am I : to Time I give
His moments back and all that in them live.
If you but look with fated eyes, behold
To you I render all things new and old.'

'Yes, that is a rough rendering of the Latin.' 'But what does it all mean?' said Mrs. Port. 'Well, I think we must find that out to-morrow. It is getting very late.' Mrs. Port took the hint, and she and the children departed, leaving the men with the strange mirror.

The storm had passed away, and James Port, throwing open the great window looking out to sea, watched the moon shining upon the waters. 'It is peaceful enough to-night, friend, now. We might almost be on a ship becalmed off an island in the Spanish Main. It is hot, too, quite breathless, more like August than October.' Then he turned, and, looking at the old sailor and the new friend, said : 'Do you suppose that this old mirror has anything out of the common about it?' 'Oh yes, I am sure of it. I have heard of these mirrors, though how

they came into being the fates only know.' 'It would be strange if we could really see the old Admiral of whom we have often talked so much, whose chair is in the parlour, whom my ancestor served.' 'And mine,' said Nicholas Game, gazing fixedly at the mirror. 'The fishermen are still singing downstairs; it is not so late as I thought. Shall we all watch the mirror and see what there is to see, and then tell each other what we have seen? Each will see what his soul brings to see.' 'Yes,' said Port. 'I am more curious than I can say.' So they each sat where they could see the mirror and the reflection of the moonlit sea in its placid silver surface. As they watched they heard the fishermen singing:

' From Caicos to Eleuthera it is a hundred leagues
And bloody were the battles that we fought in waters grey.
But now it is the moonlight, forgotten are fatigues:
We dead men are a-sailing till the breaking of the day.'

While the three watchers were looking intently at the mirror young James Port came gliding into the room. 'I must see,' said he; and they let him stay.

Nicholas Game sat and smoked and watched the mirror. Presently a change passed over the alert old face. It grew younger, sterner. He saw moving on the waters a boat with muffled oars. He saw looming ahead of it a gigantic galleon. It is the *San Philip*, he heard himself say. He bent to the oar, he put his whole being into the silent work. They were under the becalmed ship. With drawn weapon he and James Port and a great company—for other silent boats had glided up—were swarming the sides of the great ship. He heard the alarm, the bugle, the hoarse cries of the men-at-arms, the boom of musketry, the shout of triumph, he saw the Admiral charging with Port at his side, he pressed on and joined them and they three alone, cut off from their

company, flung themselves on the Admiral of the Treasure Fleet and his guard. He is reacting the Homeric fight; dead men fall around him in the moonlight; he has seized an axe and cleaves a circle round the two Admirals now face to face. Round and round he races with his terrible weapon and none dare fire lest their own Admiral be struck. The duel begins in the silver light and behind him is the roar of his on-coming comrades from the bloody waist of the ship. Then he sees, almost too late, a figure, stiletto in hand, fling himself at the back of the Admiral. With supreme exaltation he is in time himself to receive the blow, and as he falls he hears the cry of surrender, the rattle of the flinging down of arms. A mist passes over the mirror and Nicholas Game, putting his hand before his eyes, awakens to his own age:

‘And bloody were the battles that we fought in waters grey.’

James Port is watching the mirror. Presently he sees a room or cabin with a great table and many charts, and seated at the table is the Admiral. Behind him, watching the scene, is a beautiful woman, and in a moment he realises that it is the woman of the miniature. Then he sees himself leaning over the table. ‘We are trapped in this harbour,’ said the Admiral. ‘You know the banks and tides. Is there any way out?’ Then Port and the Admiral worked at the charts until it was clear that there was no way but one, a passage through to an unwatched, because apparently inaccessible seaway to the south. Only at rare tides could the water carry them. ‘The Fates fight for us,’ cried the Duchess, ‘the tide is flowing now. Let me be steerswoman. I have a light, strong hand.’ The Admiral looked doubtfully at Port. Port had no doubt. ‘Angels before now

have won battles,' he said. The Spanish fleet beyond the bar, sure of its prey, sure of the greatest Admiral of the Main, were content with occasional salvoes of artillery. The attempt to force the harbour with boats was beyond the courage of their leaders in the night. To-morrow they reckoned on overwhelming the Admiral before he was joined by his own fleet. The full moon made the tropic night not light as day, but, as the Duchess said, light as heaven. They must move before the tide was at the full : the channel was narrow, reefy, sandy ; a wrong touch meant destruction. She was in command. She had learnt her lesson from the charts, and soon they were under way, gliding across the harbour and steering for a point that seemed a wall of rock, a point hid in deep shadow of overhanging trees. There was wind enough to give them way. In a moment they were out of the harbour and moving past a belt of great tropical trees into a channel only broad enough for the ship but swimming with the great spring-tide. It seemed like a phantom ship moving over the land, and the steerswoman was, as it were, an angel at the helm, alert with finesse of wrist and swiftness of eye that saved the ship, moment by gliding moment, from imminent peril of needle-rock and shifting sand. Presently she called Port and bade him take the tiller. ' We are through,' said she, ' there is the Spanish fleet, look, far in the offing, and here is the open sea.' ' What did I say ? ' said Port to the Admiral as they stood south-west for the Bahamas. Port saw in the mirror the flowing seas as the ship leapt on in freedom from all fear. And a mist passed across the mirror. It was England again.

The visitor looked at the mirror. He knew well what he would see. The Admiral was sitting in his

chair facing the magic mirror and watching the fleeting vision of a splendid Court ; and the Duchess, standing by, had her hand on his shoulder, while she saw herself the centre of the glittering scene. ' You have given all for me : fame, rank, the splendours of France and Spain, the glories of queenship, the satisfaction of power ; you have given all for the sake of a fugitive from the Inquisition.' ' And what have I gained ? ' said she. ' Have I not gained something greater than worldly honour, earthly power, transient possessions ? There is no hardship in love, and there is eternity in which to cherish it. And we have fought together for a better Spain, a better world. Come up on deck.' There they watched the moonlight on the quiet seas, and in the eternities around them they forecast the eternities of love. The visitor turned from the mirror. He knew it all. He had sprung from that marriage and had inherited her ideals.

' What did *you* see, boy ? ' he said to young James. ' I did not see the past at all, I think, sir. I saw a wonderful ship, a ship of old time, and I was steering it and, as I steered, you and the wonderful lady whose picture you have and father and old Mr. Game stood round me ; and as we went we passed islands and lands where everyone was happy ; we steered right into a beautiful world where men and women were beautiful also. I think it was a dream.' And as he stopped he heard the sailormen below singing their chanty :

' From Caicos to Eleuthera is nigh a hundred leagues
Of shining waters fair and sweet where many ships do lie.
The dead men they have thrown aside earth's sorrows and
intrigues,
And Death is more than Silence, for the Mirror cannot lie.'

THE GOLDEN GALLIASS

THE little seaside town had still, at the beginning of another year, some of its visitors, and among them was the descendant of the old Spanish Admiral, whose chair still stood in the old parlour at the 'Black Sea Dog' hostelry. Having found by chance a spot so strangely associated with his family life and traditions, he had become a constant visitor, and found there a new interest, a new use for leisure. An Englishman by virtue of many generations, he and his family had never entirely lost touch with Spain, and in his successful ventures as a merchant with large shipping interests he had made it his business to link himself up with the Spanish branch of his family, descendants, as he was, of a kingly stock. At last, when success had given him the right to leisure, he had interested himself in many stories of Spanish settlements in England arising from the landing of wrecked crews from ships of the Armada. That those alleged settlements were largely legendary he was convinced, yet here and there, on this or that English or Irish coast, he had come across villages where there seemed to be a strong Spanish or even Moorish strain, villages whose inhabitants were utterly different from the people of neighbouring villages, swarthy, black-haired folk who never intermarried with the fair-haired rosy people around them. It was after examining such a village that he had come to the 'Black Sea Dog' and discovered James Port and his stories and his magic mirror.

His wife and children were not less interested than he in the whole story, and this September they too were staying in the town, though not at the inn, since quarters there were restricted. But the children were in and out of the inn all day, and the Port youngsters found them ready recipients of all the old stories. They handled the pieces of eight and longed for piles of these Spanish dollars, and dreamt of multitudinous ingots of gold, wondered at the silken rope in the drawer beneath the Admiral's Chair, and peered a hundred times at the portrait of the Admiral hanging against the black oak in the long parlour. The children were weaving wonders all the day long and dreaming them all night.

Romance had come their way and was casting its golden net around them. From a hungry sense of romance to a vivid bout of conspiracy is but a step, and they, one and all, took the step, and with them that sturdy old mariner, Nicholas Game. The boys and girls felt that he was one of them, and were shrewd enough to realise that he had the brains, the experience, the ready hands, and the sympathetic heart necessary for them in the adventure that they had planned. With him romance was a profession which he had practised all his life, and yet, strangely enough, he had not realised that it was unnecessary to go down into the Spanish Main to find it. It and the Spaniards and their galleons and their gold lay right in front of his cottage door, and he, when his old sea eyes were wistfully watching the sea-line and his old sea heart was far away in Caicos or Eleuthera, was looking right past the magic spot and was leaving unheeded the treasures at his very door. So familiar was the spot, so commonplace to his eyes was the rocky island in the bay, not seven miles out, that it had never occurred to him that a lugger could carry

him in an hour to a place not less wonderful than Eleuthera itself. It was the children who told him—children who were so hungry for romance that they were ready to look for the pearl of great price in the oyster on their own shore. Little pitchers have long ears. Sebastian, the eldest boy, and Mariana, the elder girl, had sat at their father's feet, apparently heedless of anything, while he talked to his wife of the strange colony of indubitable Spaniards in the village up the bay and of the fact that an offshoot (so he suspected) of the village farmed the island. They heard him putting, as he said, two and two together. Was the black man who visited the inn, who brought such mysterious messages and gifts, who beyond doubt stole the chart, was he a foreigner, a Carib after all? They strolled with him along the shore in the sunset and looked with his eyes at the island, which lay a golden sea-league or more clear of the point where the galleon foundered, where the U-boat slept. To their eyes the island became an enchanted land, wonderful in its rare beauty as it lay like an inscrutable gem gleaming on the wine-dark sea. The shape of the island, with its clear-cut little peak, its iron shores where the ground-swell ever broke in lines of snow, its green and purple patches clear enough even with the naked eye and plainly field and moor under the glasses, fascinated them. They longed to live in the group of cottages which formed the island city. To rule over such an island were kingship enough, for so would they rule over the whole Kingdom of Romance, whose subjects are all who yearn for the unattainable, who hunger to do impossible deeds, who would save all who are lost, who would lose all that is vile, who would achieve all goodness in seeking all beauty, the Lords of April and the Queens of May.

There was a common yearning in the eyes not only of Sebastian and Mariana, of Arthur, Harry, and Perdita, of Alice Port and John Port, of Esther Port and Alfred Port, but in the eyes (when they told him their suspicions and began to conspire with him), of Nicholas Game. He smote his thigh, he chewed his twist, and he danced a sea-dance, waving a bottle, in the very presence of Mrs. Game. 'Be thee mad, vather?' said that lady, who knew how restless her old husband had become with the advent of peace, and feared that this was a signal for the Spanish Main, 'ee be owd for suchlike fooleries.' 'Sit 'ee down, owd wench,' said he, 'and list,' and he held up his great left hand as though he might be overheard, and whispered in a voice that could be heard far out at sea. The old dame nodded approvingly. 'It be near at hand,' she said, 'and maybe there's money in it.' 'Money,' he whispered in megaphone fashion, 'money; 'tis more than money, 'tis hunger o' heart; but there, women will not understand, tho' they be at the bottom o't all.' 'I *do* understand,' quoth she, her wizened apple-face blushing with anger, 'and I'm aboard wi' the rest of the childer.'

But this carries us too fast. It summarises in a greedy flash days of delicious conspiracy, evenings of twilight mystery when many pairs of eyes were fixed in dizzy anticipation on that Cassiteridean isle, that fragment of Atlantis which was all their hope. Romance had come down on to the shores of a materialistic land, come down winged as the sea-birds are, singing as the syrens sing, laughing as the soft south wind laughs, an elusive creature dancing on the shores and yearning with her supple arms as Dido might have yearned, out to the delectable isle where the unknown king of unknowable things kept

royal court remote from the sons and daughters of men. Nonsense enough, no doubt, to those who have never felt the passion of romance, who have never soared out of the counting-house among the countless stars, who have been content with the adjustable hive and its honey and its routine—nonsense to them, but not to those who hunger and thirst for the Unknown. There were days of preparation, involving the collection of victuals, of weapons, of spare sails, of a shopful of bolts and bars, oars, and all the spare parts of a romantic venture, barrels of water, photographic apparatus, a diving-suit (whence no one knows ; supposed to have been stolen from Government stores), fowling-pieces (several), fishing tackle, an old Spanish word-book, two volumes of *Robinson Crusoe*, seven swords (rusty), a bag of tools (borrowed), a few pieces of eight (from the drawer), two small cannons (unsafe), and a little keg of powder, a dozen hammocks (on loan), mother's medicine chest (stolen), a box of draughts, a dozen family photographs, five eider-downs, a slate, two compasses, a hot-water bottle, three pairs of field-glasses, two telescopes, a looking-glass (new), a fountain-pen, and two bottles of rum (old). So they departed at midnight, when the moon was full, with just enough breeze to carry the good lugger *Ariel* to alien shores.

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There was never such a voyage before in the history of romance. Mrs. Game was in the prow with all the girls nestled behind her—Mother Carey's chickens, she called them. Mr. Game was at the helm with five bandits around him and a bottle of rum in his immediate vicinity ('for the look of the thing,' he said to the boys, as he wiped his mouth

with the back of his hairy hand). Jacob's ladder is based on earth. To those who have sailed under a moon-full sky, with a bellyful of wind and a gurgle of tide, with a ragged rim of cloud on the far horizon and a clean touch of wind in the mouth, there is nothing to tell; they know the pull of the boat, the quick click of the water, the pallor of the stars, the sense of mystery; they see on the sky-line the strange shape of the isle, they feel the desolation of the waste of waters under the rippling moon, the sound of breakers on the departing coast, the warm light of the far-off, sea-bound ship, the clip of the sail as the boat swings round, the flicker of the moonlight from the approaching coast, the cry of a bird awakened from its billowed sleep, the deep under-murmur of the eternal sea. So they drew on in the warm September night, and one by one the Mother-Carey chickens fell asleep and the boys nodded in the swooning twilight of romance. Nicholas Game never nodded. He puffed away at his pipe, and he skilfully approached the isle at the one spot where landing was possible. The beach, the only beach, came up at him out of the twilight of the sea, and he drove his boat at it with unhesitating eye. It was a moment of difficulty; a few yards and he would have split the ship on a needle-point, but he soon felt it grounding in deep sand, and his gruff voice echoed his relief. The boys were alive in a moment. Sleep slipped out of their eyes as night slips out of the dawn on the breathless Line. 'What shall we do?' they whispered as they looked down on the shore and saw shadowy figures moving in the dusk. 'Take the tiller. Cast the anchor. Bring the bottle.' Before the last word was ended they saw the rotund figure clambering down.

It was useless to take the tiller. Mrs. Game had

cast the anchor, and the bottle had gone. So they climbed down on to the silver sands. There they stood in a group and presently they were joined by the girls, and they heard strange voices speaking in a strange tongue, and heard Nicholas himself speaking in tones of authority and in a foreign tongue. The night was breathless, a hot sea-wind came up from the south, warm lightning opened the heart of the inscrutable sky, a benediction above the setting moon. In a few moments two of the inhabitants of the isle came before the children, bade them welcome, invited them to the farm, but in such strange dialect as made the words seem almost foreign, laughed at their shyness, pointed over the rocks to the left, and said something about spring-tides and hidden ships. They were dropping with sleep and nodded their heads, dreaming that they dreamt, and before they knew where they were they were in a great farm kitchen drinking hot milk and eating cakes, while Nicholas expounded to the stately farmer's wife the wonders of the Spanish Main and showed her coins which she matched from a box of black oak from the back of the great hearth. The party were expected. Nicholas had seen to that, and when the children were packed away asleep (the big boys in the hay-loft for the look of the thing), Nicholas laughed and Mr. Mauray, the farmer, laughed, and Mrs. Mauray, as she fried a dish of bacon and mushrooms, laughed. 'Boys will be boys,' said Mrs. Game. 'At their time o' life things unlooked-for are things indeed. We old 'uns, we takes our victuals and be content.' 'Be 'ee zure?' said Mr. Game, 'for I be thinkin' th' unlooked-for things be comin' for us. The glass be fallin' like rain.'

Mr. Mauray, the great black-haired farmer, looked anxious. 'It would be strange,' he said, softly, 'ef

it did happen.' 'What happen?' said Mrs. Game, with an eager look. 'The stripping o' the owd ship.' 'What owd ship?' 'T'owd ship the young gentry come for to zee.' 'Be ther' ship?' said Nicholas hoarsely. 'It be twenty fathom down, but there be ship. My gramfer he walk her deck and zeeth dead men of the dead days. 'Twur eighty year ago.' The sea had changed. The moon had gone. The red dawn was breaking on a heavy sea and had called up a blood-red angry sky where the lightning stabbed the racing stars. 'I never zee such a fall in the glass before, not even in the China Seas,' said Nicholas, 'the end o' the world be come, and I be in charge of these poor sleeping souls.' The farmer's wife looked at him with flashing scorn out of her great southern eyes. 'They will remember,' she said, 'you will forget.' 'I will remember too,' said Mrs. Game. 'Nicholas be too owd to remember, and he be too fond o' the bottle.' 'Wake the children,' said the Spanish-eyed woman, 'and follow me. 'Twur below the quay gramfer saw the ship.' The great adventure had come. In an instant they were awake, eager and fresh, and faced the darkling dawn with eyes of hungry delight. There was no rain, but some strange working of the sea told of a paroxysm in the deep. A curious calm lay round the enchanted isle, while they thought that the coast hidden in cloud not ten miles off was in the clutch of a sudden sea-spasm. The heaving water was evidence enough, and, though the ebb-tide was about to turn, the water suddenly fell away beyond the outer rocks, and there in the deep chasm of the fugitive sea lay a ruined ship of ancient days. 'Last time in gramfer's days 'twur exposed for three hour or more. Come, Mr. Game, bring them along.' 'We can all swim like ducks,' said the youngest girl, 'except Mrs. Game.' 'I can

float,' said she. So they moved down into the bed of the waters as confident as the Israelites of old.

It was a strange sight. The gradual descent was smooth, hard sand, but on the bottom little pools dotted the smooth surface beside innumerable needle-rocks. The sudden flight of the sea had left myriads of crawling creatures, of huge eels, gasping fish of immense size, heaving flat monsters, and scattered on the sand were hundreds of weapons of war, pikes, halberts, partisans, boarding weapons, swords, muskets, culverin, small cannon, double cannon, great pieces. Among the weapons, clinging to spurs of rock, were many skeletons of men. The rocks had anchored treasures enough, and there were small casks scattered about against the spurs. It was a desolate spectacle, lighted by the blood-red dawn. The most remarkable sight, however, was not the débris of the perished weapons and impedimenta of war. A jut of rock running down from the beach forked above the sandy bottom, and grasped in the fork was an immense golden ship, plainly not a galleon, but something unfamiliar even to the eyes of Nicholas Game, who was a master with diving work. The party stopped and looked in horror at the ship. A great terror seized them. What did it mean? A familiar voice behind them said almost roughly: 'It is the famous golden galliass, *San Pedro*.' It was James Port, and with him was the visitor at the inn. The children looked round with relief, though they knew that they had conspired in vain. 'The girls, anyway, ought to go back,' said James Port. 'I don't think so,' said the visitor. 'It is terrible, but it is history, the sort of history that the new generation must help to unmake. We will lead, though I doubt if we shall go far. The tide will

overcome the convulsion in a very short time. But come. It is a risk worth taking.'

The children and Mrs. Game followed. The horror of the thing was that the oarsmen, three hundred of them, were still at the oars chained to the banks, three hundred dead men down in deadman's land. The blood-red dawn tinted the bleached skeletons, the bony hands clutching the great oars, the skulls peering out, the spines thrown back as if in some last vast effort to save the ship, to crash it ashore. The effort had failed, the seas had swept the galliass, had littered the deep, and then the sands had sucked it and its mariners and its soldiers, its slaves, its Admiral, its priests, into the bosom of the deep, it and its chapels, chambers, turrets, pulpits, banks of oars, its cases of gold and cargo of pearls, its eternal hopes and fears, even its figurehead of St. Peter walking on the deep. It was a sight of unspeakable horror and desolation. Suddenly James Port cried out, 'There is someone living on the ship.' They saw three figures moving, and a hollow laugh broke from the islanders. Mrs. Game and the two elder boys were moving amid the banks of oars and the dead men dragging a small square chest by its leather bands. They had slipped down unseen and dared the terror in the true spirit of romance, to snatch some scrap of the lost treasure, some memory of a deathless day. Everyone envied and cheered the adventurers, and especially the quaint, rotund figure of Mrs. Game, who looked up from the chasm and waved her hand in humorous fashion. The human touch redeemed all sorrow, and yet at this very moment horror and tragedy reached a crisis. For, as the explorers found the helm and were climbing down, having hurled their box on to the sand, the ship backed, the oars swung to back-water, and the

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three hundred whitened, chained skeletons bent forward as if alive to their eternal task. The tide was racing in, a wall of water. It had reached the wreck, but had been forestalled by a ground-swell which hurled the ship towards it. With one great sighing heave the galliass leapt forward and plunged into her everlasting tomb of sand. The wall of sea seized the old woman, the boys, and their box and hurled them up the sandy slope into the midst of the anxious watchers, and for a moment of inextricable confusion all seemed lost. Yet all was well. The sea sank again to its level, the sky in a moment had cleared, the mainland shone out a line of passionless peace in the tremulous dawn. It was morning, and the events of the troubled night would have seemed but a marvellous dream of Romance had not Mrs. Game there and then begun to unpack the veritable treasure trove at her feet.

THE MAGIC BOWL OF BAGHDAD

THOSE who live in a great city rarely realise its magnitude. They are part of it. It needs a stranger to grasp the wholeness of the hive, to compare it with other hives, and measure the unfamiliar sweetnesses. The stranger has time to think, to estimate, to hear the bells, to feel the rustle of a crowd that he is in but not of, to take in the perspective of avenues, the ups and downs of city hills, the winding of alleys, the height and slope of houses and churches, the *timbre* of cries, the shadows and lights and sounds and scents, the tints of evening, the quiet fall of night in unfamiliar streets and on city rivers. To the Baghdadi London is a city not made with hands, a gigantic unity and reality, a single jewel that rules the world ; to the Londoner Baghdad is a mystical and endless maze of alleys, vast out of all sense of reasonableness, a thing teeming with mystery and life, a city enshrining the all-enveloping magic of the immemorial East in one jewelled moonstone lined with a million veins of life. But each is measured by some higher unity, some city laid up in heaven.

Baghdad sees many strange foreigners wandering in its bazaars. Fugitives from Armenistan, from Ispahan, from wherever the Christians of the Middle East are slaughtered, Jews from Aleppo, Smyrna, Antioch, Turks from the Bosphorus, Russians, Persians, Kurds, mingle with the dwellers of Mesopotamia, and not least strange are the men from

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Ultima Thule, from Britain. It is a place of wandering, wondering strangers, who gather here, as they gathered in Babylon, in the land of dreams and shadowy shapes, of magical enchantment, the land between the brimming rivers where Haroun al Raschid wandered in the moonlit nights of breathless wonderment. But perhaps even Baghdad, in its hushed teeming twilights, sees not so many strange men as London ; and the Thames is not less mysterious than the Tigris. For the Thames the Channel is the Euphrates, and she flows down from London Bridge with her mystic cargoes of human souls as hungry for the Channel tides as ever the Tigris is for the slow throb of the Euphrates across the Mesopotamian Marsh, the vast land of floods and fruitfulness. London, the Baghdad, the Babylon, of the West, hungers, too, for the sound of many waters and hides in her bosom mysterious strangers who come and go with tidings of strange things. This warm May evening one of these strangers emerges from some alleys north of Holborn, wanders across Red Lion Square, and drifts in dreamy fashion across the tide of traffic and into Lincoln's Inn Fields. To those who look for wonderful creatures, many have been vouchsafed in London : Chinamen magnificently robed, with pigtail hanging even to the heels, might be seen in the open daylight of Chancery Lane ; turbaned men, negroes, American Indians, lords of the yellow races, have walked in strange attire, but rarely perhaps so curious a figure as this man. Tall, proud, with fixed gaze he strides along heedless of the evening hum of humanity. He wears the Zaboon, or inner white cloak that the Baghdadi wear ; above this, to meet the chill of a western climate, he wears the Abba cloak of Baghdad, an outer cloak woven of camel's hair striped brown and white. The evening

is close, and he wears it open, with the Zaboon shining beneath. Upon his head is a turban, significantly green, with the folds hanging down his back. A man of great height dressed in such fashion drew the eyes of all, but he was unconscious of the stir that he made. The children, as he crossed Red Lion Square, were too frightened to call after him, a wonderful, almost terrible figure, with its little black beard, the half-glazed eyes, the gliding movement. He wandered in Lincoln's Inn Fields as if expecting some one. He stopped under the trees in the growing twilight and lifted high his hands, as if invoking some evening God of the Marshes of Mesopotamia. Even as he stood there, a solitary figure—for children who play late in that historic spot had shrunk away—the closing bell rang. He perhaps thought that it was an answer to his prayer, and at the same instant a soldier rose from a seat and came towards him. 'Who would have thought to have seen you here, Shamran, son of Hellowa?' said the Englishman in perfect Arabic. 'I knew that thou wast needing me again, Richard, son of Robert,' replied the Baghdadi, 'I heard your call.' 'But why, how, are you in London?' 'The sea brought me. I am here. I am a messenger from a king of the East to the kings of the West. I go to the City of the Franks. I have Frankish blood in my veins, kings' blood they say. I carry peace from East to West.' 'Well, we must leave here, anyway,' said the soldier. 'Haroun can't carry on in London like he did in Baghdad.'

He led the way, and soon they were back in Holborn, and presently, climbing innumerable stairs of an old building, the soldier and the man who had been at Mecca were in a panelled room, high up above the roar of moonlit London. 'Why did you call?' said the Baghdadi, squatting by the cheerful

fire. 'I want to know if my brother is alive or dead. If anyone knows, you know.' Shamran stroked his beard. 'Allah is good,' he said. 'We shall see.' Another soldier was writing at a table. The Inkstand before him was of silver, curiously fashioned with what looked like endless writing on its grey, moony surface. The Baghdadi's eyes flashed as he saw the Inkstand. 'The Bowl,' he said, 'have you the Bowl, too?' 'Yes,' said Richard, son of Robert, 'we have the Bowl. Where is it, William?' 'I put the roses in it,' said William, nodding to the Mesopotamian in a friendly fashion. 'It is on the little table by the fire.' The foreigner went up to the table, and, taking the bunch of yellow roses out, emptied the water into the coal-scuttle, and polished the Bowl anxiously with his robe. 'It is good that they were yellow roses, not red,' said he. 'Why?' asked the Sergeant at the writing-table, lifting his head for a moment and showing a very British mustachioed face. 'Red is blood, yellow is gold. It may be an omen. But dream and see.' 'What tomfoolery is he up to?' said the Sergeant to his friend. 'Hush!' said the other, 'do you not remember all he did for us in the desert?' 'I should think I do—fine old buck, old Shamran, Son of the Beautiful. But what is he at here in work-a-day London? Just look.' The strange figure had taken the little table to a spot where the full moonlight fell into the room. On the table he placed the large silver Bowl, and into it he was pouring something from a silver Flask inscribed with what looked like endless sentences, repeated over and over again, as on the Inkstand and the Bowl. Then he bade them extinguish the lamp. A fitful fire flickered across the moonlight, which filled half the shadow-haunted room. 'Foolery, foolery,' muttered the Sergeant,

'Jack Robertson is dead. I saw him carried into the Arab's tent west of Nisibin. Why, you and I wouldn't have slipped off with the mullah if we hadn't known he was dead.' 'I always said he would get better,' said the brother, 'but you were my Sergeant, and I had to go.' 'We could do nothing,' said the Sergeant, 'and there was just the chance. Life is sweet.'

'Life,' said the Mesopotamian in soft-flowing Arabic, 'life is sweet. How sweet, the infidel knoweth not. What do you know of the true raptures of life, you who dwell beyond the fold? It is sweet, even as pure water and hanging fruits and green grasses under the date-trees in the desert. There is a sweetness of life that only the believer knows, where the arid desert of this life, blown across with the burning winds of passion and the whipping sands of pain, is gone for evermore, and man purified, beautified, walks (as I indeed walk) in the Paradise of God, in gardens where no sand is, and the voices of women are low and sweet as the murmur of bubbling waters. Life is sweet. John, son of Robert, loved life better than you loved it. Yet he gave it, or thought that he gave it, for you. He loved his brother and his friend. Therefore, life was sweeter to him.' 'We thought he was dead,' said the men, 'or we would have stayed.' The Mesopotamian towered in the moonlight, and extended his arms to the moon. Thrice he did this, and then he prostrated himself at the foot of the table on which the Bowl stood. Slowly he rose, and waved his hands above the Bowl. 'Shut your eyes,' he said. The men obeyed. 'Now look,' he whispered in a far-off, dreamy voice, 'look : it is almost morning.'

The men, as they opened their eyes, saw as it were

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a new universe rising from the Bowl. The rim of the Bowl became the edges of the limitless desert, and on the eastern edge they saw the tremor of the dawn on the horizon of the arid wastes of Hither Asia. London had gone. The two men were back again on the desert march from Mosul to the Taurus range. The dreadful day was coming to greet the scarcely less dreadful night. The strange, weird beauty of the desert dawn had come. Some Arab tents, a group of misshapen camels, some mounted Kurds, lances in hand, showed against the growing light. A sudden morning wind, a breath of the furnace, lashed their faces, their parched mouths, black with thirst, moved in fear of the coming sun, their wounds ached, their lacerated feet dragged slowly on. Their glazed eyes opened and closed with the sleep that vermin and thirst denied them. So they turned from the dawn, and, hardly heeding the crack of whips, the prick of lances, the wretched prisoners of war stumbled on along the stony way facing the helpless West. Such misery is rare in the records of the human race. Rare are human woes wherein no comfort is. These walking skeletons, survivors of siege and war, too strong to die, smitten with days of agony under pitiless glaring skies, robbed of foot-gear, head-gear, clothing, naked to all the outrages of pitiless, devilish enemies, burdened with honourable wounds, swarming with lice, devoured of flies, tottering with fever and disease, these brave, enduring, iron men staggered on without comfort save such help as comes from invincible fortitude of soul, from unconquerable contempt for their tormentors, from love for one another. They could not help each other. Their escort saw to that, and when a man fell and died they could but glance at him with eyes of imperish-

able remembrance and stagger on. When the sun was high they stopped by some Arab tents pitched in the barren wilderness, and waited for the falling of the sun with such sustenance as their captors chose to supply for the delaying of slow-footed death.

The two soldiers looked out upon the terrible scene from their London fastness, and presently they saw themselves lying on the sand outside a squat Arab tent, and they saw beside them in this vision of themselves a third man. A voice whispered, 'John, son of Robert, lies there.' Anxiously they looked. Surely he was a corpse already. The eyes were closed, and the greyness of death had crept over the naked, sun-tanned form. The sun was nearly down the west. It was time to move again. The Sergeant and Richard shuddered and heaved each other up, and bent to lift John. But his eyes remained closed. His body was limp. Surely the Deliverer had passed that way. The gaping wound on his thigh had ceased to drip. The soldiers watched the re-enacting of the dreadful scene. Suddenly hoarse cries commanded the resumption of the march, and as suddenly they saw Shamran son of Hellowa come, none knew whence, and lift the body and bear it into the tent. It was done in a moment, even as the stars rushed out into the pitiless Bowl of God. The two men looked at each other. The two men in London heard the Sergeant say hoarsely to Richard, 'Come, my lad, your brother is out of our care. March.' And, after one terrible look, they marched on into the dreadful night.

They watched the darkling scene. An eerie light lay over it, and the soldiers saw themselves creeping along hour after fearful hour. They saw the miracle

happen. They saw Shamran come behind them in the darkness and stay them, and lead them away from the column, away into the desert from the one known track. In the darkness they watched themselves, each holding an arm of the Mesopotamian, and stumbling on for what seemed interminable hours. Presently the moon rose, and its rays fell on a small encampment where a little eager-eyed Arab girl stood by the almost monstrous shape, for so it seemed in the desert moonlight, of a camel. Shamran bowed before them and said, 'What would my lords? All that is mine is theirs.' And in the strange light, as he bowed, he looked to them even as a visitant from heaven, as a son of God. The two men in London watched the scene, and saw the good Samaritan bring them back to life on his green oasis. 'Do you remember?' they kept saying to each other, 'do you remember?' 'Yes, yes; there are his children, there is his mother Hellowa, there is his brother taking out the flocks.' 'Why did he not save John?' said Richard. 'John could not have walked. He was beyond help, our help, Shamran's help, even if he was alive. John is dead. We were right to let ourselves be saved. Life is sweet.'

And they heard a voice beside them repeat, 'is sweet.' And they rubbed their eyes. The desert scene had gone. The Bowl had gone. The lamp was alight again. And, even as they rubbed their eyes, they saw sitting in a chair a third soldier; but Shamran was gone. John had come back. He had been saved after all. He had lived through captivity in more kindly hands than most. He was free. They questioned him, but he had nothing to say save the old familiar story of the captivity. Yes, he had one thing to say. Shamran, who had

saved him, was dead. That he learnt at Aleppo. 'But he was here to-night.' 'Oh no! He is dead. His mother sent me his Bowl, which is now in my knapsack.' 'But he was here to-night.' 'Oh no! You must have dreamt it.' Then the Sergeant saw on the table by the Inkstand some wet writing in Arabic characters which said: 'Life is sweet, even my life where I am, which is neither Baghdad nor London, but a city nobler than these.' The Sergeant read it aloud. 'Yes,' said Richard, 'he *was* here this evening, Shamran the son of Hellowa.' And the three men sat and mused: Shamran, son of the Beautiful.

POACHING PIXIES

FRED HARRAGE, with the advent of high summer, becomes nocturnal in his habits. There are no doubt many reasons for a change that pains those who like to see him marching over the moor with conscious rectitude on his brow and the fruits of his rod and gun in one or more of his many pockets. But that is in the autumn, the late autumn when the heat of the year has abated and man goes forth to his labour without fear of the sun. There are many reasons for Mr. Harrage's nocturnal spell. There are medical reasons. The June and July sun beating down on him sort of turns him, so he says. Then, again, there is a demand for labour in the day. Every hand is wanted for haymaking, and Fred is a fine fellow with a fork or a rake. But here again the doctor intervenes. Fred is not so young as he was. The very sight of heavy manual work in the sun sort of turns him, so he says. Fred was a good farm-hand in his earlier days, but, as he says, Time will have her fairings, Time will be paid, Time is a market mistress. Time has abated (so he says) Fred's natural force, stiffened him with rheumatism, and made his arms less agile, his eyes less quick, his ears less acute. Time's fairings have taken from Fred the powers of which he was most proud. So he disappears from the summer daylight even as the tortoise disappears from the winter daylight. But, unlike the tortoise, Fred does not give his whole retirement to sleep, nor indeed does he spend the

daylight in bed. How could he, said Mr. Multon, with all the night work he has to do? Fred be very particular about his gun, his fishing tackle, his flies. He has a fly that he shows to no man, but a fly that no trout can refuse. Tons of trout, said Mr. Multon, have yielded up freedom and life to that fly. It is a fly that no other fisherman has ever used, a sort of baby green dragon-fly, and Fred can move it along the waters as if it were alive. But just at present, except as a special favour to a trusted friend or a rich patron, Fred leaves the daylight river alone. There is no spate yet, the salmon are restlessly waiting to come up, and Fred is quietly waiting too. But if his days are meditative and busy, his nights are getting full of action. 'Whur,' said Mr. Multon, looking round the farm-kitchen, 'whur be Fred Harrage at this moment when we be getting ready for bed? Whur be he? Be he in bed? He be, in bed o' river, or he be in the bracken thinking and waiting, or he be watching and counting the young fawns; he be great animal lover, be Fred. Whur be Fred now? He be busy man anyhow this lovely night.' 'I zee he looking very zorrowful up the river this afternoon,' said a farm-hand. 'I zed to he, I zed, "Fred," I zed, "'ee be lazy man, not helping varmer wi' hay," I zed. He zed nothing, 'cept he did shake his head and look zorrowful. "What be 'ee upzides wi', Fred?" zed I. "I be afeard o' the fairies, William," zed he, and he did shake his head and look zo zorrowful. I be zorry for Fred. I think he be goin' to die, he be zo zorrowful.' Mrs. Multon shook her head. 'He be artful and lazy. But he be afeard o' fairies an' witches, rightly fearful. They be lookin' for he who never do go near church or chapel. They will catch he one day; will it not be zo, vather?'

‘I do think it will be zo,’ said Mr. Multon. ‘I tell ’ee all a story o’ Fred and the fairies and witches. You know what weather there have been all June. Never such weather for years on the moor. The moor cannot be dry, but it have been as dry as it can be, and though I do zay the zame, it have been surpassing weather. All nature have rejoiced. She have put on wonnerful clothes, zo to speak, she have. The river-flies have shone like jewels, the birds have been shined up ever zo, the sheep have been lazy in their wool, the little colts have danced like deer, the fawns have run like childer, the hawks have circled like flies, the cuckoo have called and called till she be a burden in the land like the turtle be. It have been wonnerful year for living creatures and for the flowers and bushes and trees. Did ’ee ever zee such lanes as these riverzide lanes be this year?’ The farmer looked round the kitchen. Mr. Warlock nodded: ‘It have been like vairyland, and the birds did zit on the little zwaying boughs and zing zo that the twigs did tremble with the zong in the evening time. ’Twur, ’tes, like vairyland. As I did goo down lane by Cowcastle where the Old Men be zed to be, only las’ evenin’ it did zeem to me in the zilence as though all the emptiness of the great zilent land were vull o’ little people who might coom round I and zay, “Will oo’ dance wi’ we mid the pink champions?”’ And the old fellow stroked his beard and smiled at his fancy.

‘That be zo,’ said the farmer impressively, ‘that be zo. The great naked hills, whur the brake still be low, with slow-moving sheep and kine, and here and there a dancing fawn or colt under a singing lark, these hills I do zay’—and he looked at the younger people and the awed children with knitted brows—‘I do zay, zeem to be full o’ zomething that might be

anything and might, zo to speak, come in the zilence of the sweet evening, and zay, "Will 'oo dance wi' we?" "I do by no means hold wi' witches, but I do know that just by there Mrs. Zippin did choose to live all by she. I do zay to I, when I do be resting after haymaking and dreaming like in the evening (we do all be resting this evening, Mr. Warlock), I do zay to I, why did Mrs. Zippin choose that spot? But Mr. Warlock did touch the truth when he did zay "vairyland." That be where Fred Harrage do come in. He is rightly afeard, this season, o' vairies. It be their year, as it wur their year when he wur young man when they did seize he just when he wur a-poaching.'

'But surely, Mr. Multon,' said a visitor to the farm, 'you don't believe in fairies? You are a business man and a practical man. Fairies are neither practical nor business-like.' 'Well,' said Mr. Multon, 'you are an old friend and I must be frank with 'ee. I do and I don't believe in fairies. In talking to you I don't believe that there be these creatures, because you don't believe and it is easier not to believe in 'em. I *waunt* quarrel wi' no man about fairies. But if you wur to believe in fairies we would be nearer kin. For mind 'ee, sir, they be there for they who do not shut the eyes o' they. You say they be not practical nor business-like. But if they be not, how be it that they rob Fred Harrage, that they make he fish for they, shoot for they?' 'What do you mean?' said the dazed town-dweller, 'I never heard such nonsense in my life.' 'Well,' said the farmer, rather coldly, 'I had better say no more about it, but what be nonsense to some folk be good sense to other folk.' 'But do tell, vather,' said his wife, who was enjoying the dismay of the visitor. 'There be strange things

that be true all the same, sir.' 'I know there are. Do tell us the whole story, Mr. Multon, and then I can judge. If a business man like you believe, why should not I?' 'I do not zay I believe,' said the appeased farmer, 'but I do zay that they be practical and business-like. Fred Harrage tell I the story like this, and vairy rings be everywhere about here. Fred Harrage had gone out early one evening long before sunset with a big basket for fish, with his rod in a case and his gun. It was a wonnerful evening, and just before the sun dipped it filled the whole river valley with dazzling light so that the dragon-flies by the shining pools seemed like glinting angels, and the kingfishers darting shone ever zo and the naked hills seemed to watch the green withies and the shining meadow where lonely Fred walked in the heavy silences. Fred he called on owd Mrs. Zippin and had tea wi' she and promised she a rabbit and some fish. She wur girt, tall owd woman wi' all her teeth and black hair and flashing eyes, queenlike. She said to Fred as he left the cottage and struck down the hills towards the river, "Be 'ee careful, Fred, my dear, for if ever I did zee a night when a man would be pixie-led this be the night. The meadows do swarm wi' they to-night. Do 'ee be careful, Fred, and change thy zocks zo be as they do catch un. I do hear they gathering fur the game.'" 'Did they catch he?' said the farm girl anxiously.

'Let Fred Harrage answer for himself,' said the farmer in a relieved tone, as at that very moment the haggard face of the poacher appeared. He looked rather grey, tired and dishevelled, and Mrs. Multon hastened to supply the meal that the poacher evidently needed. He cheered up under the process, and, joining the party which was sitting round a

slow-burning log and some turf (for there was a cold touch in the air) he settled down, and exclaimed, 'I'll fish no more for fairies.' The party exchanged glances. 'It is fifteen years since they wur as thick as they be to-night. I have run for it and left my fish behind.' 'Did you have luck, then?' 'There is no luck in fishing—if you can fish. My basket was full of the beautifullest spotted trout, big fellows, as ever eye did zee. They be gone, basket, new basket, and all; and,' added the man with a humorous flash of his round blue eyes, 'my fishing licence, which I always keep in the basket, has gone, too.' 'Did you see them?' asked the visitor. 'I felt 'em,' said the poacher. 'I'll never fish without gaiters again.' He pulled up his rather dilapidated trousers and showed a pair of brown, hairy legs covered with indubitable blue pinches. 'Pixie-led and caught,' said the farmer. Fred nodded. 'Tell the folk about that night fifteen years ago. I was just tellin' of it and what owd Mrs. Zippin zed to you, when you came in, providential like.'

Fred Harrage looked at the visitor gravely and measuringly, and then began. He addressed the visitor. 'You and I, sir, have fished this river, shot this hill together. In those days, sir, I could fish and shoot better than to-day. Time is a great lady, and will have her fairings, sir. But you know I can fill a basket, shoot a rabbit, and do other things.' 'I do, indeed,' said the visitor. 'Well,' went on the poacher, addressing them all, 'after leaving Mrs. Zippin that evening I felt there wur nothing I could not do. There wur a sort o' magic in the air. The light wur such that it zeemed to bring things right up beside the gun, and as I walked down the hill and along the little stream to the river I zeemed to feel as if the whole lonely place were mine, that I

wur lord of the solitudes, master of the lonely, naked hills. I went on till I came to a girt meadow on the river-side near by Cowcastle. I seemed to feel that the meadow wur different to what a meadow should be, that though I wur alone in it, though I wur the only human for miles and miles, that there wur other things not human and not rabbits or what not watching me in the grass. Then I thought of what Mrs. Zippin had zed, and I laughed to I. Zo I pulled out the rabbits and laid they down, and I sat on a grassy knoll by the river-bank right in a comfortable little circle. I waun't afeard then o' fairies. Zo I sat and thought and then I got up and fished. There wur a big moon, and what wi' that and the daylight I could zee to fish for about half an hour. I lifted the fish from the water as easy as dipping in a bucket. They came as if they loved I. Such a basket o' trout no man before ever caught. Suddenly it wur too hazy to go on, and zo I sat down to pack up. Then it wur that I knew that I wur lost. I looked round the meadow and did not know it. I wandered up the meadow, and as I walked I heard tiny laughing all round me. It *wur* laughing just as if a little stream were trickling with laughter. I wur quite cool. I did up my rod. I tied up my basket. I packed my rabbits in my pockets. But the laughing grew louder and louder. The air seemed full of laughing, and a late cuckoo sounded right through the laughter over and over again. Then I tramped off to the gate. There *waun't* no gate, no where. I walked for hours in the meadow. It wur as big as the moor. I walked till at last I wur zo weary I dropped down on the long, dewy grass. 'Twur what they wur waiting for. They wur over me in a moment, hundreds of 'em. I could feel 'em in my pockets,

in my ears, up my nose, in my beard, in my boots. I did give up I for lost. I could hear them in the fish-basket. I could feel 'em a-pulling out the rabbits. Then I did think of what Mrs. Zippin had zed. "Change thy zocks zo be as they do catch un," zed wowd witch to me. Zo I did pull off my boots and I did pull off my zocks and did turn they inside out, and I did put my left zock on my right voot and my right zock on my left voot, and I did put on my boots. There wur no more laughter. The girt moon did shine down on the flowing river and on the steady hills and on the shining hedges and on the gate that I had sought. Zo I did get up and goo, but my rabbits wur gone and my fish wur gone, and I did go home a zad and zorrowful fisherman.'

The company looked in triumph at the visitor. 'What did I zay?' said the farmer. 'The hill be vul o' they to-night,' said Fred. 'It be hardly safe to be abroad.' So tradition lingers on the moor: tradition and something more. A sense of the unseen in nature taking beautiful forms that only the elect can see, or terrible forms that only the wicked can know, or delightful, mischievous forms that only the mischievous and the delightful can have traffic with, this sense is in the heart of the people. Men and women do not labour all day in great and wonderful solitudes without holding converse with the spiritual forms, be they what they may, that underlie the manifestations of Nature and give outward form to the inward spiritual grace of Nature. Who would not be pixie-led on the green-grey meadows by the sounding river under the moon and the shadow of the eternal hills far from the haunts of men?

THE POACHER'S DILEMMA

'It be a very difficult position for poor Fred Harrage,' said Mr. Warlock to the company who had assembled in the farm kitchen after the first day's hay-making, and were tired but hopeful since the weather looked like holding and the hay crop was plentiful. 'It be no doubt a light sort o' trouble in these days o' real terrible troubles, but at the same time for a man of his age it be a serious thing. You may say, why did a man o' his age want to marry a widow o' thirty-three, a man of settled habits, so to speak?' 'I do *not* call poachin' a settled habit, Mr. Warlock,' said Mrs. Multon sourly. 'It be a settled habit wi' he,' said Mr. Laxter, the blacksmith, wiping his hands on an imaginary leathern apron. 'Fred do carry a licence,' said Mr. Warlock loyally, 'and he have bit o' land o' his own which do in a fashion entitle he to a gun whereby he may keep down varmin on that there land.' 'No rabbit,' said Mrs. Multon, 'would go near they thistles. He do not *need* a gun.' 'He do need a gun,' said Mr. Warlock warmly but incautiously. 'He do live by his gun. But there,' he added, seeing the opening, 'that be neither here nor there. In a moment o' weakness he did woo Mrs. Williams, and Mrs. Williams did reciprocate the weakness, she being a sort o' cousin o' his, and farming some eighty acres an' in need o' hands. Moreover, they do, I think, love one another.' 'A good farm-hand be Fred,' said Mr. Multon, 'so be he

will stick to it. You did zee he this day a-haying. 'Twur fine zight. Mrs. Williams, who did work other end o' field, she did zay to I, "Varmer," she did zay, "did ee ever zee man work like Fred, though he do zeem zo zad?"' They all shut their eyes and recalled, or rather visualised, the afternoon scene that glorious early July day. How lovely the land looked! Through the heart of the gracious upland valley a great salmon stream broke its way with many a roar as it met recalcitrant rocks, with many a vista of foam as it twisted and turned and broke round grassy islands or took to itself little shouting torrents that poured in from every fold of the moor. And from the river rose on each side great green meadows framing little farmhouses, meadows that wandered up until the darker heather claimed its place. The eye looked up to the skyline, and the line itself from this upland point was far away, with many a dip and many a tree-lined lane wandering up to the highest point of all to which the skyline led. And above the moor were floating tabernacles of white cloud: cloud that revealed depth after depth of whiteness until within the innermost shrine a fold of gold mingled with the silver, and the heart knew that some starry priest of nature was hidden therein making thanksgiving to God. A glad and simple and gracious scene, while close at hand the hedges shone in the sunlight, and the dog-rose, white and pink, and the elder offered altars where sweet birds sang. This field was the first to be cut. Mr. Multon and his men, and with them the chastened Fred Harrage, had toiled with the great scythes since dawn the day before, and had laid long swaths of green grass low, line after line. A day of wonderful sunshine had made it possible to turn them, and that afternoon

they had all toiled in the heat cocking them. Never was there so pleasant a spectacle; the dancing, sunny children with little rakes saw that there was no waste, while girls with upturned sleeves and great rakes did yeoman work, and the men, some soldier-men and one sailor-man, as well as the elder men and Fred Harrage, had performed miracles with forks. The whole great field was cocked before they would yield, and by then the moon was up, mingling rays with the sunset, and a strangely interwoven mysterious light lay over the whole party as they strolled back to the farm, the children giving flute-like calls, while the late blackbirds and the still later larks made their clear resonant music amid the great silences of the moorland. But Mrs. Williams, who had come late, made an excuse and disappeared, and Fred Harrage, who had come still later, hurried away down to the river, to bathe, he said, and so the party was without them as they took supper in the stone-floored kitchen.

'Iss, he be good worker, be Fred, when he be melancholy,' said Mr. Warlock, 'an' he do have good cause to be melancholy, what wi' the military 'presentative on the one zide and Mrs. Williams on the other. He be like the wowd moke wi' a bundle o' green oats o' one zide o' he an' bundle o' fresh hay o' the other zide o' he. "What be I to do?" zay the wowd moke. "I do like woats an' I do like hay. What be I to do?" An' the wowd moke he did starve to death. His wowd body be buried on Mrs. Williams's farm.' The company laughed; they pictured the donkey twitching an ear toward the oats, then an ear toward the hay, and then, being incapable of choosing, solving his dilemma by the simple expedient of death. 'That be what I do fear 'bout Fred,' said the farmer anxiously.

'I be feared he will fall into the river and be drowned o' purpose.' Mrs. Multon screwed up her face. 'He be cunning woud humbug as well as poacher, be Fred,' said she. 'Mark you my words, he will have *both* the woats and the hay. That do be Fred's habit, 'specially when he do look zo woebegone and miserable. It be not natural for he to work hard like he have worked this day.' 'Well,' said Mr. Laxter weightily, 'I do like he, but I do think there be zomething in what missus do zay. He be woud friend o' mine and given me many a nice fish, where from I do not rightly know, for they big fish do move fast in the waters, but I do zay that Fred be woud humbug and that he will have both the hay and the woats. Military 'presentative he did tell I fine story when I did shoe his woud mare last week. He did zay to I, "Poor Fred Harrage," he did zay, "he wur wi' me this week very late at night. He did bring wi' he large salmon, great salmon, and he did zay quite open, he did zay to I, 'Captain Benshot,' he did zay, 'Captain Benshot, I be come to bribe 'ee with this great salmon. Here be my licence to fish, sir. I be come to bribe thee.' I did zay," zed Captain Benshot to I, "I did zay, 'Why should you bribe I, Fred? You be not o' military age. I know youm age, Fred. Go 'way. You do not need to bribe I.' He did zay, 'I do need to bribe 'ee, Captain. I be military age, I be Grade I. under new Service Act.' 'You be not, Fred Harrage.' 'I be, and that's what the salmon be for.' And zo he left, and left the salmon." Zo Captain Benshot told I.' And Mr. Laxter wiped his mouth and wiped his hands on the invisible apron. 'I do begin to zee something,' said Mr. Warlock, wrinkling his great brows.

'I can tell funnier story than that,' said Mrs.

Laxter, 'though you did not tell me o' Captain Benshot, vather. It be strange story. I wur up at Mrs. Williams's varm other morning; she wur so buzy that I did stop up there to help she. 'T'es a nice varm, and I do love the apple orchard this time o' year, wi' the young fruit a-colouring zo vast and the long green grass a-licking up the tree-trunks. It do look so quiet and nice, and then Mrs. Williams she do lay her washing out on the grass in the orchard, and it do look zo white amid the green. I did help she to lay out washing, and she did begin to talk o' Fred Harrage. "He be nice man, be Fred," zed she, "but I will not marry he, for I will not marry any man that be not fighting for his King and country, and Fred he be not doing that." "He be too wowd," zed I. "No man be too wowd," zed she, "and if he be too wowd to vight he be too wowd to marry I." "Ploughing and zowing must be looked after," zed I, "and perhaps he have ailments that make he unfit. Perhaps he do have bad feet or very coarse veins, or a jumpy heart, or the sudden staggers, or be blind o' one eye an' weak in the other. Many do zeem like that. Perhaps he be unfit to zit in trenches all the night long wi' water up to his waist." Mrs. Williams she did take clothes-peg out o' her mouth. "Yes," zed she, "country must be looked after and ploughing done; but do Fred ever plough? And as to ailments, it may be that he do have ailments; but if that be zo he be no man for me, and, moreover, he do *now* zit often all night long in water up to his waist, else where do they great salmon come from? Iss, I do like Fred, but he be not patriotic enough for I. If he be wowd and have ailments he be no good for anyone; if he be young and strong he be King's man and should fight. I will ha' *naught* to

do wi' he." And she did zit down in the grass and cry, for Fred he be good, useful man at varm work when he do like, and she wur short o' hands, and, moreover, she do love he. Zo I did comfort she, and zay Fred wur thinkin' o' joining up.'

'Iss, it be hard case," said Mr. Warlock. 'Poor Fred Harrage !' And at that moment Fred Harrage came in dressed in khaki, with the magic letters A.S.C. ('A Serious Call,' he explained later) on his shoulder, and on his arm was the happy, pleasant-looking Mrs. Harrage, formerly Williams. They had been married that morning, and had worked as far apart as possible in the hay-field all day in order to spring this surprise in the evening.

'It wur like this,' said Fred. 'My case wur hard case, for zo be as I wur Grade I, I wur certain for general service, and zo good-bye to Alice, and, zo be as I wur not Grade I, I wur dirt under her feet. 'Twur hard case, and zo I did consult military 'presentative in a friendly kind o' way. I did try he wi' salmon, I did try he wi' trout, I did try he wi' tears, and he did always zay he did know my age and would not take I. Then I did try he wi' guile, and did show he that he did mix I up wi' my cousin, who be elder than I and did have the zame name, and I did at zame time explain my hard case. He be lawyer in civil life, an' did laugh zo drefful and zo long that I did leave he in anger. But next day he did tell I something, and I did laugh as I did never laugh before. I did laugh and laugh and laugh till I did ache, an' yet I be strong man, wi' never a flaw nor a fault, and be man o' iron, though I be not quite a boy. I did pass doctor Grade I and did marry Alice this very morning. And then I did find—oh, 'twur zorrowful—that her fine varm o' eighty good acres be going out o' cultivation for

want o' direction and want o' labour, for she be, though zo very nice and good and sweet, a poor weak woman in manner o' speaking, and could not do it all. I wur distressed, an' I did put case before military 'presentative, an' he said I wur varmer now, and must tend the land, and do my work for King and country that way. That be it, be it not, Alice?' 'That be it,' said the newly made wife. And presently the pair retired into the orchard for a talk, and then Mrs. Multon exclaimed with emphasis, 'Twur *as* I did think. Fred Harrage do have *both* the woats and the hay.' 'Well,' said Mr. Warlock reflectively, 'there be no harm done. He wur over military age, any way. This Captain Benshot well knew. 'Twur a question o' gettin' over the scruples o' Mrs. Williams, and Fred, who be a wonderful man in such matters, he did get over they.' 'He be wowd rogue,' said Mrs. Multon, indignantly, 'but he will ha' to work hard now. Mr. Williams he died o' overwork on the varm, and I do hope as Fred will do the same.' 'My dear,' said Mr. Warlock compassionately, 'live and let live. 'Tis a comedy o' manners. Here they be coming. Let us give they a welcome with the fiddle, "Haste to the wedding," and, tired though we be from the haying, let us have a country dance wi' they. 'Tis good old custom, and let us keep it up.' And so they met the beaming pair on the threshold, and all went out into the moonlit, tiny orchard, and Mr. Warlock struck up a wedding dance beginning 'Haste to the wedding.' Something in his melody turned the sour sweetness of things into full sweetness, as ripeness follows sourness in nature. Mrs. Multon relented and kissed the bride; then all kissed the bride, and even Fred was allowed. Then the old man wove into his music, as the country folk

paced their paces centuries old, inherited who knows whence—wove into his music a wonderful dream of home and home life, of tenderness, self-sacrifice, labour, love, and hope. It was a festival moment indeed, and the old musician poured into the hearts of all a sense of the eternity of human love and the splendour of human duty that no listener ever could forget. And, as he played, they paced their steps in the moonlight, their smiling faces touched with moonbeams, and dreamed their dreams of all good things to be. 'I will be good husband to thee, dear Alice,' he whispered as they ended the dance, and the music died away in infinite tenderness, in sweetness long drawn out. 'Did I not choose thee?' said she. And the marriage moon moved up the starry sky.

AT THE TWURNING OV THE ROAD

'I COULD almost draw un on my thumbnail,' said the wounded soldier dreamily to the world in general rather than to the elderly nurse beside him. 'Draw what?' said she. 'The twurning ov the road, of course,' said he, as he heard the question obtrude itself on his day-dream. 'Of course,' she echoed, and added: 'How far is it from the village?' 'It be a good step from Wiltwater, it be, but it be not so far from Burleford.' 'I do know the twurning ov the road. I did gie un a look when I wur on leave,' said she, dropping into the man's dialect and giving him a quick look. So she entered into his dream, and tears were not far from her thoughts when he added: 'Do 'ee draw un on the thumb-nail for I.' He was badly wounded, and shell-shock and gas had added to his martyrdom; but if the mind could become normal, the body, it was thought, would follow. By a strange chance the elderly nurse was from his own land and spoke his tongue and thought his thoughts. Very quietly she spoke. 'Do yo remember:

'An' I do bide all day among
The bleäten sheep, an pitch their vwold;
An' when the evenen sheädes be long,
Do zee 'em all a-penned an twold'?

He looked up and answered:

'Oh! I be shepherd o' the farm,
Wi' tinklen bells an' sheep-dog's bark,
An' wi' my crook a'thirt my eärm,
Here I do rove below the lark.'

Then he said, 'I do 'member. Take I to the

twurning o' the road.' And then she began, and the soldier closed his eyes and dreamed his dream. The road ran up from the valley, steep and winding, between wonderful hedges where the dog-rose hung in white-pink abundance and the red hawthorn massed its wealth. The winding hill-road passed many a field-gate in the hedges, and if one lingered at a gate a lark would linger in the sky, and the eye would wander over the golden meadows and moorlands where the early bell-heather is springing into splendour and the whortleberry ripening its first harvest in the long hours of wonderful sunlight. Endless vistas of moor and hill, valley and river, open out from each successive gate, but the road itself is sheltered by the luxuriance of June, with the late ash coming into feathery leaf and the early oak already sedate and gracious. So the road winds up, and in the late afternoon little boughs sway under the weight of singing birds, who seem with open bills to be drinking the level sunlight. And at last the shining moorland is reached and the road runs northward straightly on till it touches a far-off group of cottages and stops. Coming up from the other valley the road is steeper still and framed in beech-trees, splendid creatures whose pale, clean, naked, wandering limbs almost wall in the shadowy lane. And on the level it runs straightly on till it touches a far-off group of cottages and stops. The cottages and a little farmstead form the elbow of the road, whence can be viewed the mysteries of two valleys and two rushing rivers and endless miracles of billowy, shining moorland. But if folk come up the hill and along the road from the south they cannot see anyone who comes up the hill and along the road from the east until suddenly wayfarers meet: a corner of infinite surprises, where birds are singing

all day long, where the wild rose and the butterfly kiss one another in profusion of greeting, where the wild clematis is in such abundance as to seem like cloud reflections. It is the turning of the road. There are quite a number of cottages, and there is a post-box, and the postman, as he comes in his little cart, whistles loud and long a quarter of a mile away to say that he is coming, that he is taking letters, bringing letters. 'How brown he be,' said the soldier, keeping his eyes shut. 'He be brown as nuts. Did 'ee zee he?' 'I did zee he. He did zay to I, if zo be as 'ee zee Jim Milton do 'ee zay to he we be proud o' he.' 'Did postman zay that? I be Jim Milton.' 'Did 'ee zee mother?' he went on. 'Did 'ee zee . . . iss, did 'ee zee Kate?' 'I did zee all. All did zay same but I did not think to zee 'ee, Jim, zo soon. But 'ee must not talk, Jim. I will goo if 'ee talk.' The wounded man looked up. 'I be better, nurse; do 'ee tell I woone thing. Do mother look for me comen hwome?' 'She do look zo. You must be good and be well again soon.' 'Do Kate look for me comen hwome?' 'She *do* look. She do stand and stand at the twurning ov the road. She be looken both weäys. She do torment postman.' 'I do love Kate,' said the soldier simply. 'Woone day I will come up road quite quiet and creep along hedge and zee she watching with her brown hat on in the zun. She be watching for I.' And with a smile of satisfaction he shut his eyes, and the nurse thought that he was asleep. But presently he said: 'Teacher, can I goo hwome? Kate be waiting for I at the twurning ov the road.' He thought that he was at Sunday School again, and when the nurse, with quivering lips, said, 'Iss, 'ee can goo, Jim Milton,' he smiled and fell asleep.

FRIAR BACON'S CLOCK

'TIME,' said the strange old collector of old clocks, 'Time is a strange thing. I sit among my clocks sometimes and listen to them all ticking together, in time and out of time, catching each other up with quiet ticks and loud ticks, patient ticks and hasty ticks: tick, tick-a-tick, tick, tick, all of them like live things with their hearts vibrating to some distant, unknown melody. Yes, Time is a strange thing, and sometimes I wonder if Space is anything at all; I wonder whether Time is not, after all, the only real thing except me in the universe.' 'Except you,' said his companion, 'why you? Why are you more real than the very substantial sea-captain who is addressing you?' 'We are all real to ourselves,' said the old man, 'and since I cannot see into your self neither you nor anyone else is real to me; but what are real are my clocks. I have here one or two clocks of interest, clocks whose faces have looked upon the faces of famous men and women. Here, for instance, is a clock made by Mr. Huyghens somewhere about 1660, an admirable instrument that carried the amended suggestion of Galileo as to the use of the cycloidal pendulum into practice. This clock was acquired by Charles II and stood in his bedroom. It kept the time well enough for him. Here is a better clock made by Mr. William Clement in 1684 with an anchor escapement. It once belonged to James II, and was admired by Mr.

William Penn. These clocks are interesting from the scientific point of view, but from my point of view are unimportant save in so far as their old faces can recall something of the times of revolution and counter-revolution. What really interests me are the earlier clocks, and those I keep in two special rooms. To you, as a seaman, who regards clocks, or rather timepieces—for such I take it your chronometers are, insomuch as they register the time, but do not speak it—the interest in clocks or timepieces is one of accuracy. The rate of your chronometer, the knowledge of the speed at which it goes wrong, is all-important to you. I am more interested in the speed at which individuals go wrong. As a retired lawyer, I am more interested in the human than in the mechanical problem, though I understand the mechanism well enough, in the “rate” of the individual rather than the “rate” of the chronometer. It is of the human side of the clock that I am enamoured.’ The old gentleman stopped, and, balancing a pinch of snuff on the thumb of his left hand, looked humorously at his old friend and crony, the retired sea-captain, who was his neighbour in the little country town.

‘I prefer, Mr. Gosworthy, my pipe,’ said Captain Clements. ‘In my opinion the pipe is a companion unequalled in efficacy. You speak of the “rate” of clocks and human beings. I take, I believe, since I became a widower and since the marriage of my children, more interest in the “rate” of my pipe than anything else. Yet it can hardly be called a “rate,” since it responds to my moods in a way that is almost human. As I sit by my fireside with my pipe I recall with a vividness impossible in any other circumstances the vicissitudes of my career. For instance, only last night I was re-enacting as the

clock struck twelve the fashion in which I ran a cargo of cotton into Liverpool, in 1865, with such detailed accuracy that I really believed that I was on the bridge again at the most desperate moment of my career. I can hear now the guns. . . . 'Forgive me, Captain Clements, we must not be led from the subject in hand. I am interested, always interested, in some of the marvellous exploits in which you state that you were the leading figure, and I think I know nothing more interesting than your dash—for the Pole was it?—in 1858; but it is my turn to-night. Take just one pinch of snuff and do not think me testy; it is exactly thirty-five years since I gave up the use of the pipe. I broke the habit in a moment and instantly took to snuff.' The old man adjusted his glasses and stroked his great white beard with a gleam of satisfaction at the act of self-abnegation. 'I did it to please my dear wife. She considered smoking an unbecoming habit. But there again you are leading me astray. We meet day by day, night by night, and somehow or another, Captain Clements, it is always—do not think me testy, but somehow or another you always hold the field. I have had no adventures. For years and years I led the humdrum life of a conveyancer, but all the while I kept my hold on my hobby and earned the means to support my hobby in dignity as well as my wife and children. Ask my wife. But I forbid you to say one word before you have seen the holy of holies, the place where the heart of my hobby beats.'

'Mr. Gosworthy,' said Captain Clements, stroking his equally white beard and wrinkling up his good-humoured face, 'you are an obstinate man. I take your snuff, though it will make me sneeze; but I insist, before we go to the room where you keep your treasures, I insist on finishing my story. I was on

the bridge, and I knew that the American frigate was certain to intercept me unless some subterfuge new to the sea was invented. I lit my pipe, I thought furiously; the subterfuge came. . . .’ ‘No, you shall not sit down,’ said Mr. Gosworthy grimly. ‘I am lost if you do. This is my evening. It was promised me. For four hours last night you told me the story of the North-West Passage, and drank a great deal more whisky than can be good even for a retired sea-captain. You will come upstairs at once, or go. I remember my grandmother telling me when I was a little boy that her grandfather, who had a ship at the battle of La Hogue, was just such another as you are. He was always telling of his adventures, and would never let anyone else speak. You have no sense of equity, Captain Clements.’ ‘Do not let us quarrel, Mr. Gosworthy. Let us make a bargain. Will you dine with me to-morrow night and let me tell you after dinner the part that my father played in the suppressing of the Barbary pirates?’ ‘I will, Captain Clements, if you will come up now and see my treasures. They, too, are part of great adventures; and let me tell you, sir, that my father was for two years a slave in the Barbary States—a Christian slave, sir, and he carried to the grave the marks of the irons. Moreover—and I will tell you an interesting point as we go upstairs—his case proves the whole doctrine of acquired characteristics. For two years, indeed I believe for four, or it may be ten years, he was a galley-slave. He married subsequently to his release at the hands of that noble seaman, the late Lord Exmouth, and had five sons. Every one of these men, including myself, secured a place in the university boat.’ ‘Why was that fact,’ said Captain Clements, as they entered the sacred room, ‘not

brought to the notice of the late Mr. Darwin ? ' Mr. Darwin, sir,' said the old conveyancer furiously, ' was, in my judgement, an infidel. As a Churchman and a gentleman, I have always refused to allow his name to be mentioned in my house.' ' I am sorry,' said Captain Clements. ' Dr. Mendel,' added the old gentleman, ' was a very different person. He was a man of religion, and he restricted his attention to sweet peas.' ' Am I allowed to smoke in this room ? ' asked Captain Clements somewhat timidly. ' You are,' said Mr. Gosworthy, calming himself with a pinch of snuff. ' Let us turn to a worthier subject.'

It was a smallish, comfortable room, with two arm-chairs by a substantial fire. Most of the other rooms in the house were beset with clocks, and for this reason the two old friends met more frequently in Captain Clements' house, where there was only one clock in the hall and a large chronometer with a meteoric history in the study. The noise of the cross-ticking, the multitudinous ticking, the vast variety of clock-bells, and the general feeling of time in chains struggling to be free, tried the nerves of the retired captain, and on grounds of health he managed most frequently to secure his friend without his clocks. But this room was free from the tiresomeness of time. On the contrary, it was singularly quiet. There was only one clock in the room, and the clock was a large but singularly beautiful creation, with a murmur rather than a tick, and a strike that was like the booming of distant waters. ' That,' said Mr. Gosworthy, ' is my treasure. I will tell you the history of the most remarkable clock in the history of horology.

' You are an educated man : you have read widely and well since you came home from the sea ; you have studied history, and particularly you have

studied the lives of heroes, French and English. Is that not so ?' 'It is so,' admitted Captain Clements, 'and perhaps I should add that I have particularly studied the history of adventurers. The type of men I like are John Hawkwood, of the White Company, Bertrand du Guesclin, the Black Prince, Bayard, Drake, Hawkins, Morgan, Paul Jones, my father. Let me tell you this about my father. No man ever carried letters of marque more gallantly than he. In the year 1806. . . .' 'Captain Clements, enough : is this my evening or is it yours ?' The white-bearded captain bowed his head. 'Well, then, you will not be surprised, or at any rate not annoyed, if I introduce you to some of those whom at present you only know in the cold pages of history, bring you within earshot of them, so to speak ?' 'I do not understand what you mean,' said the plain captain ; 'they are all dead and all but forgotten.'

'That is just my point. Time is the only reality, and there is no reason why time should not record sounds and scenes. We try to record Time ; Time should record us.' Captain Clements listened patiently. He was used to the old man's metaphysics. 'Now,' said Mr. Gosworthy, 'I want you to look at this clock. It was probably reconstructed by Henry de Vic, the friend and fellow countryman of Charles of Normandy, who became Charles V of France, the son of King John, who died a man of honour in an English prison. Charles succeeded in 1364. I will not go into mechanical details, but there are reasons to suppose that this clock was made long before 1294 by Roger Bacon during his last sojourn in Paris ; that it drifted into the hands of Henry de Vic, that it was sent to Delft and was brought to London in 1369 by a pair of Dutch clock-makers who then settled in England. The earlier history I have

secured from a note in a thirteenth-century hand in Bacon's work on Geometry. The note is almost certainly by Bacon himself, in an excellent script. After the death of the Dutchmen the clock lay hidden and forgotten in deep cellars beneath a fourteenth-century building. Thence it was cleared out, not twenty years ago, and sold as old metal to me. I have discovered its secret and reinstated it. It would be idle for me to dilate on the extraordinary gifts of Roger Bacon. He forestalled most of our modern discoveries in science, and this clock in its final form was the culmination of the discovery which he played with in his Talking Head. He discovered not only the principle of the phonograph, but he incorporated it in a clock, and made it possible for the record of speech to be reproduced. Henry de Vic knew the secret that Bacon had hidden in the wheels, and obtained records of the speech of the great men of his day. Now,' said the old man, approaching the clock, 'I will set the machinery, clumsy, complex, but effective, in motion.' He touched a spring, and at once a strange, far-off sound of music filled the room, and presently the old men sitting by the fire, each with a hand to his ear, and with sparkling eyes, heard words: 'Listen, it is Eustache Deschamps declaiming his Ballade on the death of the Constable of France, Bertrand du Guesclin,' and they heard, clear and sibilant, accompanied by the touch of a lute, the words:

'La flour des preux et la gloire de France,
Victorieux et hardi combatant,
Saige en vos fais et bien entreprenant,
Souverain homme de guerre,
Vainqueur de gens et conquereur de terre,
Le plus vaillant qui onques fust en vie,
Chascun pour vous doit noir vestir et querre :
Plourez, plourez flour de chevalrie.'

'But it cannot be,' said Captain Clements, 'that we hear, actually, a hero of that great age speaking!'
'It is so,' said Mr. Gosworthy firmly. 'It is the dirge of the man who drove the English out of France. Listen, you shall hear many men talk; listen, it is Froissart; . . . again, it is Chaucer; . . . now it is Wiclif. The Norman chose his men well. A mechanical device, you will say; interesting, but to us, who know these devices, not overwhelming. But, Captain Clements, I believe that old Bacon looked farther than that. I believe that he built up the theory that Time holds recorded all thoughts, words, deeds, and can be compelled to unchain those records; that Time is a subsisting thing, and not merely a tale of evaporated thoughts; that it can be brought to book, so to speak, if we can devise the appropriate machinery. I believe that Bacon was on the way to build that machinery when—he died. Space, in my judgement, is a mere function of Time. If we can move in Space we can move in Time, can look before and after. Do you apprehend me?' And the old man took a gigantic pinch of snuff with a significant shake of the head.

'I do not fully apprehend your meaning, Mr. Gosworthy, or at any rate your idea. But this I know: that much as I should like to hear the exact details of my father's campaigns when he was sailing under letters of marque, yet I do not like the idea that all my thinkings and sayings and doings are somewhere permanently on record. It is all very well for an old lawyer like yourself, who knows about as much of the world as a tortoise; but what about me, a sailorman, who knows every port that a ship could ride in? No, sir, I do not like your theory. It is not so much that I am afraid of a just judge; but, if all the facts about any one of us came before

the jury of the world, the world would be too hot for anyone to live in, and there would be no more cakes and ale. I don't like your clock. I think you had better break it up.' And the sea-captain lit his pipe and looked at his watch.

'Now that is exactly the view to which I have come. It was only this morning that I saw a method of carrying out the idea with this very clock. On the whole, I was frightened: conveyancers are men, not angels. Yes, we will break it up to-morrow. But what a loss! You and I are the only living men who have heard Chaucer singing his own songs. Now he will be silent for ever.' 'So will my father,' said the captain, 'and he was a good story-teller, too.'

THE MODERNIST

THE Bishop of Wiltchester, when he held his service of thanksgiving in his cathedral for the mercies vouchsafed in the victory of Belgium and her Allies, returned thanks in an almost personal sense. He had been very anxious in the years immediately preceding the Great War as to the future of England. His own career had made his anxiety a very real thing. A man approaching sixty years, he had lived through the final phase of the Industrial Revolution, and he had almost feared that the last phase was worse than the first. But he had never lost hope since he had never lost touch with the men and women, the youths and maidens, the children of the generations among whom he had worked. His was an interesting personality, and his appointment to the see of Wiltchester had created some little stir, since his robust, sensible views, his sturdy radicalism, his social delightfulness which verged on eccentricity, and his large-heartedness in literature, art, music, and drama had shocked successive Prime Ministers and had appalled High Church and Low Church alike. It was with a sense of the irony of things that a Tory decided to make him a Bishop of an agricultural see. That eminent statesman differed in almost everything that seemed to matter from Dr. Edward Brake, but he recognised his great gifts and revelled in his exquisite knowledge of English

cut-glass. Cynics said that Dr. Brake had exchanged a claret-glass used by James II for a mitre. But, in fact, there was one other thing in common. The statesman and the Bishop both recognized that the reign of democracy was at hand, and the statesman said frankly to his friends that if the Church were to survive it must get out of the rut of placid ecclesiasticism rooted in intolerance. That was the real reason why this eminent Tory passed over the claims of the pushing head master of Richton, of the learned, somniferous Dean of St. Peter's, of the saintly Hebraist who had occupied the living of Crossways just long enough to be eligible, passed them over and selected instead a man who had gone from his fellowship at Oxford to a slum curacy, and thence to a succession of slum livings in great towns where he had left the marks of a strenuous and almost passionate pastorate. Dr. Brake had never married, but he cannot be said to have lived a solitary life. Indeed, he had a series of lives which fitted into each other like those balls of many colours that open one within the other until at last there is a secret hiding-place for which all the outer balls, so gay and delightful, exist. In this inner secret place a jewel might rest. So it was with Dr. Brake.

There was, first of all, his outer official life, which was conducted with due decorum. He saw to it that his Church was a lovely place, with all its mediaeval charm presented in the fairest fashion. He freely spent his private fortune in restoring lost loveliness, in supplying exquisite music, a perfect choir, beautiful flowers, and from this scene of sacred art he preached his penetrating sermons which drew men and perhaps repelled women, sermons which dwelt on the essential oneness of all classes, on the duty to educate all up to the highest point of their

capacity, on the necessity of making political life clean and lovely, and one in which every person of every class should play a direct and earnest part. He believed in democracy while he sorrowed over it, and he preached on all the great social problems of the day with the slenderest of reference to the ecclesiastical side of things. Religion, he would say, could not come into its own while the way of life was cumbered with unnecessary poverty, remediable disease, curable ignorance. He declared that in preaching thus he was preaching the riches, the health, the knowledge of Christ. And he carried all this into his great dirty parish, and took care to know well men and women of all classes in it. The Tories and the High Churchmen, who were many, would have hated him had it not been for other and inner regions of his complex personality. The next ball was coloured blue, or whatever was the colour of the Liberal party. He boldly identified himself with the party, attended their meetings, gave his great organising power to the local association, and after some years of effort took the constituency from the local brewer and gave it to a manufacturer who was doing his best to stamp out child labour in the mills. His political enemies did not attempt to deny that he had cleansed local politics, and it was impossible to hate a man who insisted on the defeated candidate becoming his churchwarden. The brewer could not refuse, for he was caught by the Rector's third ball, the social one.

The Rector's house hummed with hospitality. He was his own housewife, and there never was such a house for beauty and order. Most houses of collectors are like museums. This was the exception. The rarest glass, porcelain, and silver were in constant use. He only bought rarities

that could be used, and he exhausted the fortune that would have been spent on sons and daughters had he married, on usable rarities, on editions that made a bibliophile want to be a thief, on furniture that people sat on, and lay on, and dined at just as if these exquisite products of art had been made in a modern factory. Things of beauty struck the eye on all sides, and they were humanized by use. His idea, he said, was to educate his parish in taste, and, in fact, he succeeded. How could the brewer refuse when he drank his own rarest ales out of beakers that were two centuries old and partook of port in a glass that an expert trembled to touch, with its tiny, delicate tracery, and a stem that nature might have made? The brewer was a collector himself, and loved this impenitent, joyous host of his, who rolled out stories that crept to the Bishop's ears and made that eminent evangelical divine pray for this reprobate radical priest. But the Rector was not a penny the worse, and he gathered into his after-church suppers the young men of the parish, and taught them to love Browning, and read Ruskin, and smoke cigars, and sing songs to a seventeenth-century lute which had been brought into current use. The man's social, political, and ecclesiastical activities were endless. He scandalised, fascinated, sobered the men and women, the boys and girls of his parish. But the heart or sacred place of the many balls or successive spheres that made up his personality was something other than all this, and the shrewd Minister who appointed him to Wiltchester saw into part of the secret. He saw that, within all the heterogeneity of the man, within the gravity of the economist, the gaiety of the host, the passion of the politician, lay a deep determination to meet the fearful dangers that must arise when a

great uneducated democracy comes to rule a vast and complex social organism dependent for its very existence on lucidity of thought, on grasp of science, on purity of aim. Once, when the two men met at a social function, the Rector likened the coming of an uneducated democracy into control of modern society to the flying of an aeroplane by a drunken man. It was this figure of speech that made up the Prime Minister's mind. The Rector, in politics, in doctrine, in social outlook, was everything that was objectionable; but the Church and the nation needed him. So the scandal was perpetrated, and he was duly installed at Wiltchester.

There was not a great nor even a big town in the diocese. The cathedral city was a pocket of a place holding a covey of canons and a pride of retired colonels, a sort of nest or den in a fold of the southern hills. The Bishop did not resent his banishment from the scenes of multitudinous activities, and brought his tireless energies to a task that he knew would be congenial, for he sprang from a country vicarage in those very solitudes, and was determined to awaken life once again in these restful moors and pastures. He very soon settled with the social side of his city. He entertained largely and well, and made no pretence of being on the verge of the workhouse. There were too many of his clergy in that actual state for him to adopt a pose that would have been as painful as it was ridiculous. He was given to hospitality, and the retired colonels began to live once more. They spoke of the Bishop with bated breath. To them he was a phenomenon of the Early Church. And he lured into Wiltchester shy clergy, and their shy wives and daughters; shocked the former and delighted the latter, and made imperishable friendships with the sons of the

clergy. A scholar himself, he gave a new impulse to scholarship, and drove many young men to one or other of the old Universities. That was before the war. During the war he was busy enough as comforter and friend to all, as organiser of charities, as overseer of a thousand things. His motor-car—Government was kind in this—became a familiar thing in parishes which had long since forgotten the existence of a Bishop. He became a *Magister Scholarum* indeed, and the schools grew conscious of something new in life as he chatted with the teachers and the pupils, and gave them something of his unquenchable optimism.

One of his chief pleasures was his renewal of old relations with Dr. Battle, Rector of Wiltwater, his old Oxford tutor, and one who had watched his career with mixed feelings. Dr. Battle was a Tory with Socialist tendencies, and there was a gulf of opinion between his views and the broad Liberalism of his Bishop. But that fact made the renewal of touch the more delightful. It was a joy to cross swords with this Bishop, who was so very unepiscopal, so very human, so boisterously delightful, and so wholly good. Meetings were frequent, and the bed that the Rector could offer made unofficial visitations possible in the remotest corners of the diocese. Mr. Oldham was proud to show the Bishop his library, and the Bishop grew almost envious over the books, over rarities that he was longing to add to his own choice library. To Mr. Oldham the Bishop was a bibliophile, and that was enough. To the head master of the grammar-school the Bishop seemed the incarnation of scholarship, and the boys were taught to look on the visitant as a being who made perfect Latin verses in his sleep. But the boys were not deceived, for they had seen the

Bishop drive his own car into Wiltwater. A man who could negotiate that hill at that speed had other things to think of at night. So the boys and the head were both satisfied. So it was everywhere, and even the clergy who disapproved of his ecclesiastical views had to submit to the views of wives and daughters and adjust their ritual accordingly. The diocese in an amazingly short period took on a broadness of tone that would have pleased Saint Paul himself. The Bishop revelled in his native air, returned to the dialect of his youth with a facility that delighted every soul in the diocese, and became before the end of the war the father of an admiring people. By that time he had gripped the problems that lay before him, and these he talked over freely with Dr. Battle. Education was the first. Rural education was, he had always known it, the great difficulty to be faced. There were few facilities for higher education, and none at all for technical training. But these were not the main difficulties. The thing that troubled him most was the housing question.

‘It is here, my dear Rector,’ he said, ‘that I cannot see my way. People admire the beauty of these villages, and so do I. But I am a practical man. I love lovely things, but I only love them if I can use them. How can people *use* these cottages? Every inconvenience known to man is to be found in connection with them. Ill-lit, unprovided with water, unhealthy from every point of view, they are often unfit for pigs to live in. Yet they look beautiful. How are we to solve the question? Is beauty inconsistent with health, with comfort, with life? Of course it is not. Look at the children. They are not nearly so healthy as my slum children. They have more disease, are dirtier, are unhappier

in a land that is redolent of health. No doubt it is partly the landlord's fault, but he, poor man, gets little enough return on his money. It is my fault, your fault, everybody's fault. We are wasting the best material in the world, and we talk about the beauties of the old English villages.'

'And the worst remains to be told,' said the Rector dryly. 'If you gave many of them a model village to-morrow, with every convenience, things would be very little better. Government schemes of housing are all very well, but unless you teach people how to live in a house, better wages and better houses will not solve the problem in our time.'

"Yes, I said that it was your fault, Dr. Battle, and now you are convicted out of your own mouth. Why have you never taught them how to live in a house? That was your business, and you have not done it. I have a mind to make you a canon and take you away from the scenes of your misspent life.' And the Bishop laughed, for he knew the answer, and tried to counter it before it came. 'I know that you will say that you have tried to teach them the ultimate virtues, goodness, purity, honesty, kindness. But you have never taught them to open their windows, and wash their children, and clean their houses.' The Bishop waited for the answer, which was so long in coming that he lit a cigar with entirely unepiscopal precision.

The old Rector pondered and thought. At last he said, rather coldly: 'I know all you mean. More has been done than perhaps you know. You are comparatively young, and in a hurry. I am a Platonist, and alas! seem to have taught you Plato badly. At the back of my mind this housing problem, which lies behind all education, since it is a matter that affects the family, which is ultimately

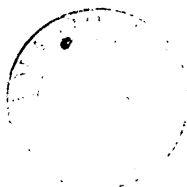
the chief educative force, has ever been working. From the first it has seemed to me that, pending action by the State on a large scale, what we clergy had to do was to make family life secure, to prevent it from dissipating. I have always had in view a house not made with hands, a perfect house holding the perfect family. In a sense, I have been a sort of spiritual draughtsman or architect, planning for this very day which has come. I quite agree, indeed I told you just now, that the slum mind will destroy the model village, will in a few weeks transform it into a slum. Knowing this, I have tried to work at that mind, to transform it into something better, and I have found at least this, that it is transformable. That is something. I have fought for family life, and not without success. That is something. I have pictured, Christmas after Christmas, the ideal family, the family where Christ the Carpenter lived, and I have shown Him at work in the house, making it fit for habitation. That is something. I have told them that the house not made with hands is something within the reach of everyone. I did what I could. I think the men we sent abroad have justified my belief. They had not got slum minds, and when they come back they will demand something other than slums. If I am to blame, so are you.'

'I have already admitted it,' said the Bishop.

'Yes, but you can get to work now. You can work hand in hand with councils and committees in a way that we ordinary clergy cannot. You can help in a hundred ways.'

'I am hard at it,' said the Bishop, 'and am proposing to corrupt—if I may use the term—not only the County Council but all the District Councils. But there, let us leave the subject. Just look at the

hill-side.' A moving white mist that had a warm touch of spring in it was creeping in patches up the wide expanse, and the distant hill beneath the clear, sunny February sky seemed to be dotted with innumerable tabernacles nestling in the brown bracken of last year, and round the gorse already gay with bloom. It seemed almost as if an army were camping there in tiny snow-white huts. It was a curious spectacle, unreal, spiritual, almost startling. It was, as it were, a vision of things to be, a sort of hint that homes not made with hands were even then in the making on that lone and lovely hill.



THE ENDING OF THE ROAD

FIVE springs ago the never-ending road which winds its way out of the forest, spinning its spell as it goes, was dreaming of an immemorial past and calling up spirits from the vasty deep of unnumbered centuries. It was a lonely forest, and the moorland that made part of it seemed even lonelier than the endless aisles. The brackish creek that ran in from the sea and clove the moorland asunder on its southern side held, here and there, a ghostly barge, and near the waters were a few reclaimed meadows where gipsies encamped. The rare folk that trod these lonely ways seemed attuned to the spirit of solitude, and the grizzled ferryman who plied his leaky boat across the creek seemed like the ferryman of the fairy tales. One day he would leap on the bank, leaving his oars in the hands of a traveller, who would become a ferryman for ever and ever in the timeless land where the plover sadly calls the tides in from the sea to listen to the sighing of the wind in the inscrutable woods, mystery calling to mystery, as is Nature's wont. Five years ago. Then all was suddenly changed.

The quiet earth took on her phase of terrible passion. The cry of a great wrong ran like woodland fire through the world and roused the sleepers: a wrong, brutal, bloody, faithless and cynical, a wrong that threatened the freedom of man in every land and the liberty of all nations. At first, men, and even nations, disbelieved that such a thing could

be, shut their ears, and their eyes, and their souls to this terrible thing, this sudden hurling of massed millions of fighting men on unprepared nations, with instructions to slaughter and burn, and ravage, and so secure through the sudden horror of the deed a relentness hold on the riches and liberties of the earth. So instantaneous was the crime, so well-favoured was the criminal, so far-reaching were the tentacles of this human octopus, that for a time there were men and nations that doubted, or pretended to doubt—or were too fearful to admit—the horror of the crime that Germany had committed against Belgium, who was her ward, against France whom she had wronged in other years. But England was not one of these, and the land of England turned from her dreams and her sloth to slay the octopus which was poisoning the earth, the hydra of modern times.

Herculean task enough, and for four bitter years the task took its appointed course. The record is written with letters of fire in many millions of aching hearts. And if the homes of England are filled with proud desolation, so, too, is the nation as a whole. Fearless, it has been through the fiery furnace, walking therein with God, and, despite all that is written to the contrary, has come forth cleansed, with shining eyes looking to that future which the dead have made possible. School and chapel and church keep the dead in living remembrance. Above the list of the fallen in the great schoolroom at Wiltwater the head master put up the lines :

‘ Those whose names are written here
Entered Silence without fear.
Now they speak with golden tongue.
Listen ! They, like you, were young.’

For more than four years the slaying of the hundred heads went on, with ever two heads of evil springing forth from the place whence one was hewn. But at last genius, resolve, faith, brought the end, and on the never-ending road, which through all these years had been hammered by hoofs and wheels and tramping feet of war, the old silence fell. For a time it was followed by returning troops, and many a home-coming army retraced the footsteps of those men who had gone down to the little sea-port to return no more. For a time the sounds and weapons of war rolled along the ancient road, but less and less was it used, and the armistice winter passed and gave back to the spring a solitary road. The road returned to its thinking, but it was not the same road, and never would be again. The new experience had absorbed the old, and, though nothing was altered, though the bend of the road and the skyline of trees and the glimpses of water, of hilly copses, of bright green marsh, were the same, though the wild geese flew as high and the sparrow-hawk called as clear, yet nothing was the same since the spirits that haunted it were changed spirits, and all old things were made new.

In the far, far days before the war the spirits of the road loitered and communed with one another, and re-enacted this deed or that deed of interminable centuries. At times their antics were so boisterous that human eyes could see them, but the dreams of the road were not purposeful, they were dreams and nothing more. But now the spirits were changed. They put by their dreaming and fain would live indeed, would play a part in the purpose of the race, since the race in the great quest of the great war had shown that it had a purpose, and not for itself only, but for the world. How could they show it, these

spirits of dead men and women who had trodden the road since the days of the Roman or earlier, down even to these latter days of unquenchable hope ? So, as the first burst of spring ran through the forest and the moor, through the lowlands and the uplands, the bartons where the sheep graze, the mead meadows where the kine are, the spinny where the fox-cubs dwell, the tall firs whence the hawks are calling, the swaying larches where in the feathery first green the linnets are singing, the spirits went forth together, a wonderful legion of them, more musical than the lark, to find the End of the Road where the purpose of things should be seen. How far, said the Briton to the Roman ; how far, said the Roman to the Jute ; how far, said the Jute to the Dane ; how far, said the Dane to the Norman ; how far, said they all to the Briton ; how far is the Ending of the Road ?

And as they went, a blessed company that had no tears, they saw that a new world was in the making. The country side grew glad as they swept along it ; the sadness of it, the waste of life in hapless villages, the unpreparedness, the unfruitful solitude changed as they winged along. A new joy had touched churches, chapels, schools, and cots. The little children glowed with the health that was their birthright ; the youths and maidens walked with knowledge, which is truth and hope, in their happy eyes ; the men walked with a new assurance of the dignity of life, the women with a fresh vision of the holiness of things. Every man's hope was fixed on other man's good. The moving scene was no transitory vision, for, as tillages glided into towns, and the endless road wound its way through great places of production, still the spirits saw hope shining in the eyes of men, and a freshness as of the

morning on the foreheads of the crowd. The hovel and the slum had gone, the demons of disease had been tracked out of their lairs, the angels of thought and poetry had taken up their dwelling-place with men. At last the gates of things beautiful had been thrown open not only to the poor, but to the rich, and the values of life had become manifest at last to those whose eyes want or wealth had for centuries bound up. So the company of spirits passed on and they were happy, for they knew that this was no dream, no vision of an impossible heaven, but a change that had been wrought by a change of heart, not by any doctrine of revolution, not by any devilish policy of hatred between class and class, but by the joint determination of men under the stress of unexampled things to find out by knowledge, by sympathy, by reason, by love, the way to a better and yet not impossible world.

And the Endless Road ran on through all the glories and the shining places of England, that jewel of the sea, and the spirits of the road winged along it in search of the Ending of the Road. They no longer asked how far, but they wondered whether the end would come by some cathedral, mystic in its holy twilight, where the rolling of incommunicable music would touch the soul with the sense of the presence of God; or whether it would come on some mountain-top, sun-smitten at the close of day, whence they could see the Promised Land. But their astonishment was great when at last they saw, in a little dip of wonderful hills, the road suddenly end. It was a mysterious green spot with patches of woodland shining with the sunlight in the grey-green foliage. The road stopped in the grass, and there was an end. Not even a path ran on or a sheep-track. And just by the spot where the road ended was a signpost, so

like a cross, that at a little distance it seemed that it was a cross. And it was near this spot that all the roads of all the land had ending. And the spirits from all the roads of all the land rose in the air above the signpost, and winged higher and higher till they were lost to view in the glow of the rising moon and setting sun.

The Bishop of Wiltwater told the parable to his young men of all classes who sat with him in his great house at Wiltchester after supper on a Sunday evening. 'It is a sort of folk-story, isn't it?' said one young man, with some compassion in his voice. 'Yes,' said the Bishop; 'I suppose it is. It was told me by a man who thinks that folk-lore is race-memory. Does any one of you believe in race-memory?' They thought and smoked, and smoked and thought, and then Jasper said: 'Yes, of course, race-memory is real enough, but what is worrying me, and I think all of us, is the complement to race-memory. If there is memory of a race as a whole, there is looking forward as a whole. Do we look forward as a whole?' The Bishop lit his pipe and sipped his coffee. He had expected the question, but hesitated as to the answer. Presently he said, 'Race-memory comes up from the period of folk-communities. These stories of the road are stories of the movings and wanderings of communities. Race-anticipation must look forward to a period of communities. That is right, isn't it, Wilfred?' The boy, who had been deep in Maine, said: 'It sounds right, sir.' 'Well, but if it is right it surely means that we are moving towards a period of voluntary association again, an age of mutual help, a time when the State will be merely an instrument of perfecting

the imperfect status of the individual, as in the Roman age. Isn't that so?' 'Yes,' said another youth, with an eager manner, 'but if that is so what purpose do we find in it all? It is like a spiral. We mount, but where do we mount to?'

'Yes, that is my difficulty, too,' said the Bishop. 'Can anyone suggest a solution? Light pipes and think.' So they thought and thought, and while they thought the Bishop watched them. This to him was ideal, this thinking on equal terms with all sorts and conditions of youth, this clashing of minds, this feeble but therefore priceless feeling out after truth. At last one young man spoke. He said, 'Can there be purpose that is not personal? Can there be race-purpose, or purpose unrelated to any individual? I don't believe there can.' 'Oh! but that's nonsense,' said the Bishop. 'Have you ever seen one mind move a crowd?' 'Yes, but he gives his purpose to the crowd.' 'I know, but the crowd must have some quality of receptivity, some inchoate purpose. He could not give his purpose to a crowd of symbols. Do you see?' 'Yes, I see,' said the youth; 'curious that I never saw it before. I see too, now, the end of the parable. I suppose Christ shows the purpose, and some of us, a few of us, are capable of taking it.' 'All of us,' said the Bishop; 'that is just the difference between us and the symbols.' 'Let me see,' said the boy, rubbing his forehead. 'Tell us again the end of the story,' and the Bishop, with a smile, stood in front of the fire and said: 'The Road stopped in the grass and there was an end. Just by the spot where the Road ended was a great signpost, so like a cross that at a little distance it seemed that it was a cross. And near this very spot all the roads of all the land had ending. And the spirits from all the roads of all the land rose in

the air above the cross, and winged higher and higher till they were lost in the glow of the setting sun.' 'Was there no one left?' 'Oh, I had forgotten,' said the Bishop, 'the whole point of the story. There was a child looking up with beaming eyes under the signpost, laughing and clapping his hands in the warm spring weather.'

THE BISHOP'S MOVE

THE Bishop of Wiltchester was present at the peace celebrations at Wiltwater, and adorned that fascinating entertainment. Throughout his diocese he had taken part in innumerable peace celebrations, most of which he had helped to organise in pursuit of a definite policy. He, in almost unblushing fashion, had used the celebrations for his own particular move, his own determinate propaganda. 'A Bishop,' he explained to his episcopal gathering of young men in the smoking-room at Wiltchester House—'a Bishop in daily life ought to be like a Bishop in the game and play of chess. He ought at appropriate moments to unmask himself and glide serenely down the long avenues of the board and achieve, with apparent minimum of effort, the maximum of result. The parish priests, *adscripti glebae*, have to move slowly. They are pawns, almost peons, but, with the help of the Bishop, who can come to their help from vast distances, they can achieve immense results, can pen in the lords of the board and win the game. But for this they need the help of the Bishop and of the Knight, who, despite his crab-like motion, is capable of amazing chivalry.' So he ran on in droll, characteristic fashion, while his audience, many of them young ex-officers back from the wars, striving to feel comfortable in mufti, listened to him with almost a patronising smile at his simple comparison of a chess-board and its lords and ladies to the terrible world that they had known,

or even to the varying landscape of their own dear land. That was the Bishop's way. He liked to open the gambit in a fashion that seemed to give the other side an advantage which it was his business to see that they would never take. Peace, in the region of major tactics, is very like war, he thought to himself, as he looked at the tanned, war-worn, but youthful faces.

'Napoleon,' said one of the warriors, a major at twenty-five, 'Napoleon condemned chess as too complex for a game and too fruitless for real effort. I am inclined to agree with Napoleon.' 'Yes,' said the Bishop; 'I am always inclined to agree with Napoleon. I often think that it was a pity he was a soldier; he was such a great social thinker, such an ideal administrator. He saw right through the shams and unrealities of life and came plump on to the things that mattered. Sometimes I am inclined to think that he really might have reconstructed Europe and saved the world a century of social reaction. Supposing he were alive now, in the zenith of his powers, in an age of peace, with a free hand; what would he do? It is rather worth discussing.' The Bishop passed round a box of cigars, and lay down on a sofa with a quizzical look on his face as he surveyed those superior returned Napoleons around him. 'I rather like your point, Porson, about Napoleon and chess. He couldn't bear waste of time, and from his point of view chess was waste of time, for he saw that, in order to win according to the rules, he would have to use the very faculties that enabled him to win battles or organise other victories. So when he played he played according to his own rules, which, from the point of view of chess, were dishonest and absurd. But the illustration is valuable. Nasmyth hammers can crack nuts,

but it is not their job. Yet Napoleon, all the same, was a great chess-player with the world for a board. He even used Bishops, including the Bishop of Rome.' 'Yes, sir,' said Porson; 'I see what you mean.' 'Well, what would Napoleon do to-day? There may be one among us, don't you know,' said the Bishop, with charming candour and simplicity. 'He would jolly soon end all this strike business all over the world,' said one very young captain—'end it with a whiff of grapeshot,' he added quotingly. 'Would he?' said the Bishop musingly, adjusting his gaiters. 'He'd knock the Bolsheviks endways,' said a naval young gentleman. 'Would he?' said the Bishop. 'Did he learn nothing from experience?' 'Anyway, he would sweep out our politicians—the pastmasters of opportunism, sham idealism, insincere patriotism; self-seekers all, with no love of the people.' 'H'm,' said the Bishop. 'He'd jolly soon make the Churches kiss and be friends, anyway,' said an enthusiastic padre. 'Have you ever tried to make grown-up people, or even children, do that?' said the Bishop. 'Well, there is one thing he would do, I am sure,' said an elderly lieutenant; 'he would stop profiteering.' 'How?' said Dr. Brake. As there was no answer the Bishop rose and proposed that they should all walk in the garden and confer on what Napoleon would do in the way of world-reconstruction, and that first they should decide what he would not do.

The gardens of the old House are one of the choice spots of England, and Dr. Brake, from the moment of the Armistice, had spared no labour to enhance the natural beauties of the place. His artistic temperament told him that the work was not waste of time, labour, or money. He considered that he held the gardens in trust for the people, and that,

as trustee, he could not do better than give them something that would touch in them that sense of beauty which is the twin of the sense of goodness. The gardens were so contrived that at any point on the perfect lawns there were vistas of mysterious woodland that seemed to hide some wonderful revelation at the point of fruition. On this late August moonlit evening, amid the first intimations of twilight, anyone wandering in these gardens could not but expect Romance in some Renaissance garb to step out from among the trees and invite the stranger to join in a far quest of the unknown—a quest as dangerous as it was wonderful, as mysterious as it was insistent. The sense of the unknown was heightened by the figures half-hidden among the trees: Greek and Renaissance statuary gleaming white in the twilight. The effects were on a large scale: the noble lawns, the great walnut-trees, full of green fruit, towering above the turf, the hornbeam in scented flower, here and there a great apple-tree blushing with apples, and on the lawns vast weeping willows which hid, and, hiding, revealed, marble figures instinct with life. ‘I have added one or two things from my own collection. Rather pagan, don’t you think, this scene?’ said the Bishop in a quiet tone to a young soldier walking with him. ‘Yes,’ said the boy, ‘I suppose it is; but somehow it feels real. I wonder what pagan really is?’ ‘Rural,’ said the Bishop. ‘Would you like it better if there were symbols of the Christian faith instead?’ ‘No,’ said the youngster, ‘I don’t think I would, sir. They would be out of place.’ ‘Why out of place? Is religion ever out of place?’ ‘You know what I mean, sir. Beauty is religious, whatever the form. Somehow you have brought the sense of beauty, mystery, faith, unspeakable things, into

these gardens without the formal use of Christian symbols.' 'Not I, my dear Benet; my predecessors. They were scholars; I am not. You and I have simply entered into their labours, into their conceptions. What I find is that, after a while in this garden, my mind is attuned to thought, is charitable, full, able to look on large questions largely.' The guests, hearing the Bishop talking, gathered round him in a group, and he repeated his theory. 'Don't you feel in this lovely spot—as I was telling Benet, I am not responsible for its beauties and its subtle allurements—don't you feel that the pettinesses of life, the sense of mere competition, have fallen away like stage curtains and have revealed something which the ages of romance felt after? Don't you feel in this place, when the moon is lengthening the twilight, that a new realm of achievement is possible: something that is larger than mere economic achievement, something that fits not the economic only, but the whole man?' 'Yes,' said Porson, no longer critically or grudgingly, 'I do feel that. Life seems larger than it did ten minutes ago, more important.' 'Whose life?' said the Bishop, straightening himself, knitting his great brows and folding his arms. The young man did not answer, for he had great intellectual possessions, and he knew it. The Bishop took his arm and laughed: 'How hardly shall the rich enter into the kingdom of heaven!' Porson felt a hot torrent of blood rush to his face. 'I am entirely in your hands, sir,' he said, 'if I can be of any use in the new world; but I am afraid that my goods are not marketable.' 'We shall see,' said Dr. Brake quietly; 'but meantime forgive the half-jest of your father's old friend. Now, gentlemen, come back to the library, have more coffee, settle the Napoleon question, and to bed.'

In the library there were busts of Caius Caesar and Napoleon, and the party looked at the two men. 'What would they have done to-day with their combination of great brain-power, will-power, and character?' said the Bishop. 'They were not good men, so far as character is concerned,' said the padre. 'Better than you or I would have been in their positions,' replied the Bishop. 'But, anyway, who will tell us how Napoleon would have dealt with our problems? I think we may agree that he would have done none of the things suggested before we went into the garden. Nobody who knows anything of Napoleon's work would suggest it. It is true that he began his public career with a whiff of grapeshot; it is equally true that if Bolshevism had really got a hold here he would repeat the whiff, but that was and would be a mere incident. What were the chief characteristics of Napoleon? I think that we may say that they were an indomitable power of work, an extraordinary knowledge of human nature, an immense capacity for detail, a unique grasp of general principles, an entire absence of jealousy of other men. His civil work for France shows these qualities even more fully than his military achievements. Not a lawyer, yet he dominated the drafting of the Civil Code. He gave the world a legal system which shares with the English Common Law the government of the daily life of the whole civilized world. That Code represents his passion for detail as much as his grasp of principle. The same spirit of thoroughness goes through all his legislation. The Latin spirit has had no more wonderful manifestation. Moreover, throughout he is appealing to the basic facts of human nature. Is not this what our Napoleon has to do? He has to find the human craving that lies behind the wild manifestations and

discontents of our time, manifestations that clever, ill-educated, unscrupulous men and women are trying to use for the disruption of human society. Napoleon's mind in its civil work stood for the satisfaction of human nature through the channels of law and order. Is not that the first thing that our new Napoleon has to take in hand ? It is not the war only that has dissatisfied human nature with its conditions. People may speak of Christianity as having been proved by social conditions and by the war to be a failure. But, in fact, it is Christianity which has created the divine discontent, that dissatisfaction with anything less than full freedom for the personality to develop, which is largely responsible for our unrest. Christianity stands for equality of opportunity, for careers open to all the talents. Within his limits—and they were very wide—Napoleon as a legislator and administrator stood for the same ideal. The new Napoleon can stand for nothing less.'

'But how is he going to find this ideal for us ?' said Benet dreamily. 'The history of human society,' said Dr. Brake, 'is the history of the evolution of human liberty. The penultimate stage of that history is reached. There are no more adult slaves in physical fetters ; there are no more physical restraints on the right to think ; women are as free in those respects as men. Men and women alike are politically free so far as the theory of government goes. But there is still one class that is in physical serfdom.' 'Surely no class,' said Porson, almost dogmatically. 'Yes,' said the Bishop—'the child class. The vast majority of the children in this country, and, indeed, throughout the world, are serfs. The physical and mental incapacity of children is as much exploited to-day as the legal

incapacity of adult slaves and serfs was exploited in earlier days. This evil is greater in one sense than the old evil of slavery and serfdom, for the child-serf never obtains the physical, mental, and religious training which will make the child a free man or woman. The new Napoleon would abolish child labour and substitute, for every child, as good an education and training as the best-educated, best-trained child in this country can get.' 'But Mr. Fisher's Act is going to do all that,' said a school-master. 'Mr. Fisher says that at least a whole generation must pass before his Act becomes fully operative. In the meantime the people perish. Can no one force the pace?' The Bishop looked round at the eager faces. 'Don't you see,' he went on, 'that disaster lies ahead if another generation grows up weakly in body and untrained in mind and spirit? You know what the losses were over there. Can we wait a generation to replace them? The old Napoleon sacrificed the manhood of his generation in a vain quest. We have sacrificed ours in a great adventure for righteousness. Are we to be less wise in our generation than Napoleon was when he made, despite all the losses that he inflicted on the world, his great effort for the civil reconstruction of society? We are better off than he was. Science is our servant. We must reconstruct from the base, make childhood free, make certain of the physical and moral manhood of the next generation, peer into the very structure of things, and, working on broad lines with a total command of detail, rebuild with the certainty of achievement. It can be done now. It cannot be done twenty years ahead. If we wait for a generation our society will have dissolved. You young men, go out into the towns and villages, use your hands, your brains, your hearts. Be disciples

of the Highest, apostles of the New Age. Throng into the schools, into the colleges, into the hostels. Give every village in the land its hostel, its tiny university, its altar of humanism. Carry light into the darkness. The State is nothing without you ; with you, the volunteers of the New Renaissance, the State can achieve miracles. The great Middle Class, with its traditions of learning, with its sense of fitness and its balanced judgement, must turn to and recreate England.'

When the Bishop came to the peace celebrations at Wiltwater he found one tiny university, a university of two rooms, already at work, with Porson in charge and Dr. Battle as Chancellor. The young man and the old man had taken the Bishop at his word and were already at work ; for they had great possessions.

WINTER WALKING AND TALKING

THE Bishop of Wiltwater was seriously troubled by the question of War Memorials. Every parish was engaged in the task of fitly commemorating the men who had fallen in the Five Years War. These parishes were a little late in the work, but the diocese was always a little late in its movements. It took time for ideas to filter through from the far Metropolis and other provincial areas; the ideas had to be discussed and to be correlated with local ideas; then local talent, indeed genius, in the way of poetry and craftsmanship, had to be taken into account. The feelings of relatives had to be consulted, while the men who had come back had their views, views that were not always easy to combine with the standardised ideas that in the earlier stages seemed to hold the field. Some few memorials in the less stagnant parishes were already unveiled, and these efforts did not please the Bishop. It was not the lack of taste only that displeased him: it was the absence of originality, the disappearance of the soul that doubtless inspired the idea when it was started somewhere else. The Bishop had very definite ideas about War Memorials. He demanded spontaneity of idea, beauty of execution, words that would touch the heart of the twenty-first century, reality, faithfulness to the ideals which lay behind the sacrifice. He at first thought of calling together in the Chapter-house a meeting of the clergy of the diocese, but this he abandoned as costly and impracticable. He actually wrote to the rural deans, but received in reply

suggestions that almost ended his faith in the Church of England. Finally he settled on an informal visitation of the diocese, feeling that in this way he should not only be able to give some guidance as to the form and fashion of War Memorials but should actually gain new knowledge of the temper of the flock. Though he knew his diocese fairly well he had not yet motored round it in winter and seen what rural life in parsonage and cottage, in field and fell, was like in the short days. The test of parochial life in town and country is the winter. The Bishop, as an historian and a student of English customs, knew well enough that the mediaeval Church passed through the test successfully by binding together the religious and the customary life. The multitudinous names of wild-flowers with their references to the life of the Holy Family, with, too, their traditional religious uses, form a permanent record of the bond between the country-side and the Mother Church. But, though the names remain, the significance has faded. In other links between religion and life both reality and names have almost faded from the peasant's heart. Some folk-lore, some folk-games, songs, dances, linger, and are now being saved from utter destruction and given some chance of natural revival, but the deathless dramatic instinct of the English peasant, which took so many mediaeval shapes, in the miracle play, the moral play, the mumming, and so forth, shapes which lie behind the Tudor drama, has ceased to have fields of action. The Elizabethan dramatists came soon enough to pick up the dramatic instincts that the old Church had gathered in many a 'Winter's Tale.' The Reformation, in eschewing these vanities, left a large field to thistles and worse weeds.

These thoughts were much in the Bishop's mind. It appeared to him more and more clear that his

great opportunity was at his hand, the revival of rural social life. If he took the opportunity successfully in his difficult diocese, success was certain in all other dioceses. Slowly thinking out this question as he sped round the lonely parishes, with an hour at this vicarage and two hours at that rectory, with a cheery word for all, with a hint here and a declaration of policy there, he came at last to the loneliest of parishes, Wiltwater, and settled down for half a week with Dr. Battle. From that centre he determined to motor and walk and see the tiny hamlets at first-hand, and visit a dozen remote livings, for the most part untouched by strangers from year's end to year's end. The Bishop felt that he was a stranger, and determined never to feel it again. Mrs. Winshore, the wife of the vicar of Pallsworthy, put the whole difficulty of the position to him. 'You ask if we are happy in this lovely place? Well, look at our case, my lord. My husband never meets for a talk and a walk and a meal an educated man in our sense of the term. He was, perhaps is, a fine scholar. But now he is too disheartened to read. I never meet a woman of my own training, and never talk about anything but the necessities of life. We married because we had classical tastes in common; at least, that was the beginning of our coming together. We never talk of these things now. We are both too tired in the evening to talk at all, tired and bored with life.' 'Is it so bad as all that, Mrs. Winshore? Come, join our walking party to-day, you and your husband; leave the children, the glebe, the parish, the pigs, the cows; there must be someone, for one day, who can milk and feed the beasts.' 'I don't think that there is,' said Mrs. Winshore dolefully. 'Well,' said the Bishop, 'for once I am of some use. My driver will take over the farm while we walk and

talk. Dr. Battle is good for three miles. We shall then meet Mr. Oldham from Little Green Moor. We shall have tea at the inn at Lightworthy, and after tea John, having finished the milking, will arrive with the car. We shall then go on and have dinner with Mr. Oldham, and then we will drive you back and say good-bye.' 'What about my husband?' 'He can walk over to Mr. Oldham's. We want your views, not his. He has his sermon to write, and has to look up some classical quotations for me.'

Mrs. Winshore beamed and sped off to put on her Sunday clothes and best walking boots. It might mean a move, she thought, and a better chance for the children, mites of six, seven, nine and ten, who were gravely watching from a window of banishment this invasion. She speedily introduced them to John and bade them obey him and help him, a congenial task which involved much getting into the motor. It was three o'clock when the party, with almost two hours of daylight before them, set out. A quick frost had made walking pleasant, and even under the shadow of the wood the way was passable. At quite two and a half miles an hour they struck across the great glebe meadow which lay under the wood, a sloping barton surrounded by trees.

'It is so lovely here in the late spring and summer,' said Mrs. Winshore. 'Isn't it more lovely now?' said the Bishop, 'look at the tracery of twigs. I have rarely seen anything more lovely. It is an exquisite network against the sky, crowning the stately branchage of these great trees. One never sees a tree truly in summer. In winter and very early spring the tree's whole nature and infinite possibilities are revealed.' 'Yes,' said Dr. Battle, 'that is so. One is almost tempted to apply the analogy to one's own life, I am in my late winter

now, and I do not think that I ever realised myself before.' 'My second little boy was showing me these trees the other day,' said Mrs. Winshore, 'and wanted me to draw them. He is only seven, and said it was funny that trees took off their clothes in the winter-time.' They all laughed, and the vicar's wife felt encouraged to talk. 'If one only had time and encouragement to study nature and read the writers and poets and people who know all about it, life would be very happy in the country. Some of the country people about here really love and know all the hundreds of things, and the mistress at the little school is always talking to the children about the things around them. But she bicycles into Wiltwater at half-past three, so we see little of her. She's a nice woman, but won't stop long, I think. Sometimes old Mr. Warlock calls. He knows everything about nature. He is a herb gatherer.' So she ran on. 'I know him,' said the Bishop. 'Just look at these early bright green nettles, Battle. They always seem the first sign of spring.' 'Early nettles are very good,' said Mrs. Winshore; 'I can make a dish of them better than the best spinach.' 'I suspect,' said the Bishop inconsequently, 'that you are feeling the loneliness of the life very much, but is there no way out of it? There are most of the elements of happiness here. Can't the clergy and their wives have some reunions at brief fixed periods? War Memorials might make an excuse. Here we are through the wood, Battle; take care you don't slip. Let me give you a hand over the stile. No, I know that you are only twenty-five, but we simply couldn't carry you back, could we, Mrs. Winshore? Just look at the view over the moor. I wonder what it is in this landscape that is so penetrating. Let us wait a moment and analyse it.' The Bishop put his arm

round a sapling and looked. Dr. Battle sat on the stile and wiped his head. Mrs. Winshore gazed across the moor to make up her mind as to the exact route to Lightworthy, and then looked in a motherly way at Dr. Battle. She doubted his powers, not knowing that determined if slow pedestrian.

'It seems to me,' said Dr. Battle, 'that a landscape is very like a great poem, and more so in winter than in summer, when the roll of the land and the clean-cut setting of the woods, and the blue distances are so definitely part of the complete whole. It is to be a fine sunset. It should be an excellent walk. In a great poem we have, it is true, purple patches, as we have here, and great passages, as we have here in clouds that march before the wind in magnificent battalions, and minute but immortal lovelinesses, as in these silver birches or in some hidden, unexpected bunches of primroses that somehow have dared to bloom in winter amid the rugged hills. But all these independent beauties are necessary parts of this complete scene, of that complete poem. It is not only the rolling distance, endless in splendour of hill etched against hill, under a sky that sheds over them tints, exquisitely melting one into another from ranges of deep purple to quick spots of liquid gold ; it is not only the middle distance of folded sheep whose tinkling bells bring the sound of the poem into the picture, the middle distance of farms and nestling houses, of churches full of immemorial things ; but it is also the loveliness of the foreground, with its tiny touches of immediate life, of the hedge that begins to grow purple, of the first snowdrop, of the tracery of the woodland still around us : these all go to the making of the landscape and of the poem. But we must get on.' 'Yes, I see all that,' said Mrs. Winshore, 'but surely you

have left men and women and children out of your poem and your landscape. That is the lack I feel. I want something more than Nature. Euripides, Dante, Shakespeare, give us something that Wordsworth and you cannot give us.' 'The lady,' said the Bishop, 'has set you a difficult task, Battle. She evidently doesn't believe that only man is vile.' 'Well,' said Dr. Battle, 'I could answer that on philosophic grounds, as in fact Wordsworth did, but I prefer not to do so. Why can't we add the human element? If people were taught to think rightly about nature, to say nothing of the Power behind nature, your very pertinent criticism, Mrs. Winshore, would disappear. But just look,' added the old man with enthusiasm, 'just look at that sunset. It is the finest I have seen for years.'

Masses of gold and purple shone in the moor-edged western sky, and through these masses of molten fire the eye seemed to look at great quiet spaces of apple green, at loveliness as of some perfect, quiet, happy world set eternally behind the strife of things. Above the wonderful *cumuli* stood the first star watching the plunging of the sun. 'Peace standing behind war,' said the Bishop. 'What are we to do for peace, Mrs. Winshore? I want your advice. If you had seen the War Memorials I have seen you would despair of the race. Your remark about the need of human nature to complete the beauties of nature, a criticism with which I entirely agree——' 'I said that I had an answer,' remarked Dr. Battle with just a shade of acerbity as he pulled his foot out of a rabbit-hole. 'Your remark has reinforced an old idea of mine. Let the churches put up a list of names on a simple tablet. That is an outward matter, and so long as the tablet is simple and the names are cut deep enough in letters that every school-child can

read, the tablet is a useful record. But no tablet, no form of words, no stone work can make a memorial of such a war and of the men who fell in it. We fought the war that men and women should be free, that there should be no more wars, that reason and love should rule the world. The memorial must be some spiritual force which connotes and promotes freedom and peace. Man is not free while he is ignorant, when he is so tied with the cares of this life that he cannot think about God and Nature, that he cannot enjoy beauty and give enjoyment to those around him by being an essential part of the beauty: that is your idea, Mrs. Winshore. There can be no peace till there is freedom; there can be no freedom till there is knowledge. We must bring knowledge, the noblest knowledge, into the smallest village. What do you say, Battle?'

'I see Mr. Oldham at the top of this lane. Let him answer. I have got last year's thorns up my legs. But I may say this, that Oldham and I are even now working along the lines you indicate. I want my tea, but I may just say that Little Green Moor has already got its Institute. The only War Memorial for the villages is the Institute, a centre of life, of literary and bookish life, a place of thought and beauty. Well, Oldham, is tea ready?' 'It is, and you are late.' 'It is no fault of mine. I have been drawn into controversy.' 'I am afraid, Mr. Oldham, that the fault is mine,' said Mrs. Winshore as she presided at tea in the village inn. 'We have been settling the affairs of the universe.' 'Extraordinary thing, a cup of tea,' said Dr. Battle. 'Before tea I felt querulous and inclined to quarrel, but now in the genial warmth of this room and in this company I recant. How is the Institute, Oldham, the Institute that lives in your library?' 'It is

alive,' said Mr. Oldham, 'but unfortunately libraries as big as mine are rare. How are we to get one for each village?' 'That all depends on the way in which the denominations work with the local education authority,' said the Bishop. 'It is a practical matter. It is all very well to rave about sunsets and scenery in the way that Mrs. Winshore and Dr. Battle have been raving, but that will not give us our Institutes. When we get the building—and if it is not a beautiful building I shall not believe in it—we have to find a soul for it. It is that soul which is the War Memorial. It can be found, and found so effectually that the towns will pour their myriads landward to cherish it. You shall have your human side to the landscape, Mrs. Winshore.' Then the car came, and the party rolled on to Little Green Moor and settled down to an evening of talk and delight. Mrs. Winshore beamed on her husband when he arrived, and the Bishop led the subject round to the classics that they all loved. Mr. Oldham produced books and articles of *vertu* that awakened the envy of the Bishop, the memory of Dr. Battle, and the sheer delight in things beautiful of Mr. and Mrs. Winshore. All dolefulness had passed out of the minds of the vicar and his wife. They had touched humanity and humanism once more. All the early delights became once more the joy of the hour, and when at last the party sped away a new hope was in the hearts of all. When the Bishop dropped the vicar and his wife at Pallsworthy he took out of a pocket of the car four packets. 'It would not be fair, you know, Mrs. Winshore, not to reward the children for your abandonment of them. They were very lonely, I expect.' 'They seemed to be bearin' up when I left, my lord,' said John.

THE BIBLIOPHILE CLEARS UP

THE Rev. George Oldham, Rector of Little Green Moor, had at last turned from his memories of the war to his still older memories of his books, and had devoted spare autumnal days to a refurbishing of his palatial library. For whom the library was built is unknown. It certainly was not built and fitted for a poor, or comparatively poor clergyman. The Rectory must have been a mediaeval manor-house, perhaps even an *aula* of the fourteenth century, with additions, and the library was the actual old hall where fifty folk might have fed without discommoding the cross or High Table. That table—when there was a table—was lit by two alcoved windows looking east and west. These alcoves now had cushioned seats, and beside the windows were high-mounting shelves. The body of the hall was well lit, despite coats of forgotten arms on the three long windows on each side. At the north end above the place where the lord of olden days feasted, hung portraits, whose portraits nobody knew, but certainly late sixteenth-century faces. At the south end, above the swinging doors, was a little minstrels' gallery, and there Mr. Oldham had placed a small organ: his gift to the rectory library. East and west his books were bayed—nobly bayed—in walnut-wood, and a rare confection of subdued colour they made. Where the High Table had stood was a large square walnut table whereat the life-tenant worked. In the middle of the hall was another table where

learned periodicals slept, and on which stood a sleepy clock. South of the table was a double bay for rare books, the glass doors whereof were locked. This piece of furniture was low enough to stand at and work. To-day it was covered by an assortment of little old books, and over these the head of Mr. Oldham hovered, with here a peep and there a shake. At the broad and finely dogged fireplace, in two great arm-chairs, sat respectively the Bishop of Wiltchester and the Rector of Wiltwater. Between them was a stool on which stood three glasses of port. 'You were saying,' said the Bishop, 'when we disturbed you before lunch on business that was more important than old books, and when you compelled us to accept of your hospitality, that you were clearing up. As we have now finished the diocesan business which is my job in life, and have decided to extend the peripatetic university scheme to the nine villages in the rural deaneries which the Rector of Wiltwater and yourself inadequately serve, perhaps, since you have insisted on opening this bottle of old wine which, I am bound to say, if there were any walnuts, would have adorned a November afternoon, you will tell us what in fact you were wasting your time upon this morning.'

The Rector left the library and presently returned with a dish of walnuts in one hand and a large turf for the glowing fire in the other. 'These walnuts will be mellow after Christmas,' he said, 'but, in fact, our churchyard walnuts are the best in the county.' 'Your lordship,' he added, with a deliberate formality of manner, 'is pleased to be facetious about my clearing up; but it is in fact a serious business. For years I have been rooting out inferior books. The duty of a librarian is only to have the best books and to have a comfortable and fixed home

for every book, duly registered in an adequate catalogue under subject and author headings, with all necessary cross-references. These books are homeless. I cannot part with them, as I have towards them a sense of personal affection. The great point of my little library is that it is a personal library. Most of these books I have inherited, and those that have been added by me have been adopted into my family after the closest examination and the gravest consideration. Some of the inherited books have been expelled on the ground of unworthiness, but not many ; and for modern books I have a trial bay where few books survive, while I have an examination bay for old books which seek admission. I have also a cupboard for old books which I love and am yet doubtful about. They are the skeletons in my cupboard, and I was weighing their fate when I heard the wheels of your car. Can we hold a consultation concerning them ?'

The Bishop was delighted and stopped cracking nuts to express his horror at the thought that Mr. Oldham should have secret editions of Rabelais and of more modern French and even Russian authors. Mr. Oldham hastily protested while Dr. Battle chuckled. 'My edition of Rabelais is not hidden away,' he protested. 'Rabelais is gross, but he is gigantic, unhideable. I am, on the other hand, a little ashamed to have an edition of 'the Works of Laurence Sterne,' for Sterne at his worst is prurient though never or hardly ever gross, and is the begetter of many worse works of the same type in our own time. But, all the same, there are few writers more charming than Yorick at his best, and I cannot part with my little seven volume edition of 1811, with that curious pencil portrait of Yorick as the frontispiece. But however that may be, it leads me to this

little heap of little books. I have been clearing up, and I am at a standstill as to the little fellows : I love 'em all, but I am not sure that they ought to be in my library.' 'What are they?' said the Bishop curiously. He felt that what the bibliophile threw away the Bishop might like to pick up.

'Well, here are a little group of French books. I take them at random : *Paul et Virginie*, par Jacques Henri Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, Paris 1886. An exquisite little edition with perfect plates.' 'Put it beside *Emile*. Bernardin de Saint-Pierre was Rousseau's only reputable disciple. Moreover, he had seen savage man at first hand in Mauritius. Next?' 'Well, here are two works by Jean-Pierre Claris de Florian, his *Guillaume Tell, ou la Suisse libre*, published in Paris in 1807, and his *Gonsalve de Cordoue, ou Grenade Reconquise*, published in Paris in 1886.' 'Keep them both,' said the Bishop, 'and tuck them away with Voltaire. He was his best pupil. It is good to have such echoes of Voltaire and Rousseau.' 'Ah, if you think so, I shall keep this book, published in Paris, *An vii*, to wit *Les Aventures de Télémaque, Fils d'Ulysse*.' 'I should think so. The saintly Fénelon was the grandfather of the Revolution. When he wrote *Télémaque* for the heir to the throne the new France came into sight. The Cartesians were the ultimate source of the intellectual side of the Revolution. Anything more?' 'Yes. A curious law-book, *Coutume de Normandie*, published at Bayeaux and Caen in 1772.' 'That goes in with the others. It exactly describes the old world before the storm. You will have to keep them ; but you have nothing for me?' 'Yes,' said the bibliophile spitefully, 'Here is an English book published in Paris in 1688 entitled, *The Kernell*, or

Extract of the Historicall Part of S. Augustin's Confessions ; it is bound in parchment, and very instructive.' 'I will take that,' said the Bishop coolly. 'It is probably worth more to the book-collector than the whole of the rest of your miserable books. I shall sell this and give the proceeds to my education scheme. But I wonder why it was printed in Paris. It has no publisher's name. I shall go to the British Museum about it. But have you nothing brighter ? These walnuts are excellent, this port unapproachable, but your books are dull.'

The Bishop rose and began turning over the little three and four inchers. 'Why, here is the best of the bunch : *Paraphrase sur Job, par le Père I. F. Sénault, prestre de l'Oratoire de Jésus. Quatriesme édition, Paris, 1644.* It is dedicated to Monseigneur l'Eminentissime Cardinal Duc de Richelieu. Listen to what Father Sénault writes ; he is referring to an earlier work : "Vous le receustes avec cette douceur admirable dont vous sçavez gagner les cœurs de tous ceux que vous abordent. Et comme si vous eussiez leu sur mon visage les pensées de mon âme, vous jugeastes de mon présent par mon affection plustost que par sa valeur." There is the secret of the great Richelieu written at large. Don't you remember his face ? It is thus, that one understands why things survived until 1789. Here is the other end of the scale. Paper covers, my friends : *Campagne du Général Buonaparte en Italie pendant les années ive et ve de la République Française, par un Officier Général. A Paris an V.* The name of the general officer is in faded ink, *le Général Pommereuil*. An authentic contemporary document. These little books cover the most wonderful century and a half in the history of the world. Keep them and put them away with this nice little edition of the

Ceuvres de Madame la Marquise de Lambert, issued by the Company at Amsterdam in 1766 ; but read first her *Avis d'une mère à son fils et à sa fille* from her views on *Véritable Education*. Put away, too, these *Lettres Choies de Madame de Sévigné*, paper covers, 1887, uncut. Don't cut the pages, but browse between the leaves on the best of pastures.

' Ah, here, my dear fellow, are little books that cut me to the quick : *Now or Never, The Holy, Serious Diligent Believer Justified, Encouraged, Excited and Directed* : and the *Opposers and Neglecters convinced by the Light of Scripture and Reason*. By Richard Baxter. It is Richard Baxter at his best, burning with zeal for salvation and expressing it in prose that seems like a fiery torch even in those little pages printed at the Three Daggers in Fleet Street in 1662. " It is wonderful to think that learned men and gentlemen, and men that pretend to reason and ingenuity, can quietly betray their souls to the devil upon such grounds. . . . Alas, all this comes from the want of a sound belief of the things which they never saw." He writes mercilessly of himself and his brother ministers, of us three for instance '—and the Bishop looked keenly at Dr. Battle and Mr. Oldham : " Verily our consciences cannot but accuse us, that when we are most *lively* and serious, alas, we seem but almost to trifle considering on what a message we come, and of what transcendent things we speak. . . . I am even amazed to think of the hardness of my own heart, that melteth no more in compassion to the miserable, and is no more earnest and importunate with sinners, when I am upon such a *subject as this*, and am telling them that it must be *Now or Never*." A word for us and for our time it seems to me, Dr. Battle.' ' Yes,' said that learned man, ' I always felt that the friendship

between Tillotson and Baxter was a fact that redeemed the iniquity of that age. But what are these ?' The old man took up two dainty, tiny copies of *Rasselas*, one inscribed, 'Miss S. A. Dawson, a Reward of Merit, Midsr., 1819.' 'Sarah Ann Dawson at that date,' said Mr. Oldham, 'was a school-girl; she lived almost into our time, after having travelled as few women travel, and died, at the age of nearly a hundred years, in a little English valley—a happy valley, indeed, but large enough for her large, noble spirit. It was her Reward of Merit. Unlike *Rasselas*, she had not found variety necessary to content, and died as she had lived, a blessed soul.'

'Put the books by in that little shelf; I see that you have reserved it for them,' said Dr. Battle, with a touch of deep emotion. 'They form a picture there, clad in their fading autumnal colours, a picture that to us who know them means everything: the gradual approach of an age of transition; the forces that went to the making of it, religious, social, literary; the forces of perfect love and serene patience which survived it. You were right in keeping these little books. They have, perhaps, a significance that your nobler tomes, your splendid Homer, your delightful Virgil, proud copies, your Aldines, your morsels from the Stephanus Press, your fifteenth-century monstrosities, and all the rest of your, shall I say, rubbish?'—and the old man rubbed his hands as the Bishop twinkled—'a significance that none of these have. I confess that that old lady's Reward of Merit, equally with Richard Baxter's lightning blow at us, has moved me. Our books must be living things; we must bring them home to the heart of the world. Look, Oldham, at this tiny Tasso of yours,

see how Torquato, crowned with bays, begins his singing :

“ Canto l’armi pietose, e’l Capitano
Che ’l gran Sepolero liberò di Cristo.”

Our modern world is the Great Sepulchre of Christ. Can we find an army of saints and a captain to free it ? Can your books do nothing ? Are they as dead as we three are ?

‘Speak for yourself, my dear Rector,’ said the Bishop, throwing himself into the fireside chair, and cracking walnuts with vivacity. ‘I am not dead at all, nor is the Church, if we could only organize it as an educational force and make it a Church Militant. Now just listen to my latest idea. It has the merit of cheapness. It will cost me nothing, and it will make Oldham’s books live and become his reward of merit, little as he deserves it.’ Mr. Oldham drank his wine slowly and critically, while the Bishop evolved his idea. ‘You see, we must have rural universities, and those universities must be something much more than agricultural colleges. In every village there must be a hearth of humanism. Our countrysides have Miltons and Baxters, as well as Newtons, to give to the world. I suggest that this library becomes the university centre for the deanery. Let us organize higher education from that point of view. The clergy must become a teaching order for the purpose of higher education : lecturers, not class or school teachers, and their libraries must become the hearths at which the new generation are going to hold out their hands to the fire of life. What do you say, Oldham ?’ He agreed. They all agreed. The three men sat by the fire in the old hall thinking, thinking furiously. The afternoon sun poured in from the stained western

windows, and crowned them with curious haloes of light, cast by the Elizabethan glass. Grave and silent, they were thinking out the new Renaissance :

‘ And not by eastern windows only,
When daylight comes, comes in the light.
In front, the sun climbs slow, how slowly,
But westward, look, the land is bright.’

‘ Who is that playing ? ’ said the Bishop, looking up at the little minstrel gallery. ‘ Oh, a pupil of mine practising. He does not know we are here. He will sing presently. Listen ! Purcell, Herrick ! ’

“ ‘ There is a ladye sweet and kind,
Was never face so pleased my mind ;
I did but see her passing by,
And yet I love her till I die.’ ”

The clear, tender voice, with its Elizabethan words, haunted the chamber. ‘ A parable,’ said Dr. Battle. ‘ The hunger of the race for the fleeting vision of things, for things good and beautiful, for the Lady Knowledge. This wonderful accident is our call. It is, perhaps, more than an accident.’ And they heard the voice again singing, with unconscious pathos :

“ ‘ I did but see her passing by.’ ”

THE CATHEDRAL GHOST

No man, not even the Dean, had a greater sense of propriety, that is to say of fitness in demeanour amid the plastic play of circumstance, than the Head Verger. Tall, but not too tall, suave but never familiar, austere but never harsh, gracious but not ingratiating, notable but never notorious, he bore the burden of increasing years and decreasing emoluments with an equanimity all his own. Precinctified by long association with successive Deans and Canons, he had accumulated in his person the manners of the most select and learned colleges in the elder universities, and could recount in the precisest fashion jests gemmed with classical references which had adorned the leisure of the last Dean but one. To Mr. Jasper Heaviside, nothing connected with the Cathedral came amiss. To a unique knowledge of the history of its stones, its frescoes, its relics, he added an acquaintance with its traditions and legends that marked him as the one man who had actually entered into the life of Wiltchester Cathedral. To him the Cathedral was a living thing, and the mighty men who had built it were still alive. All else was, in a fashion, but a dream. The succession of Bishops and Deans and Canons was to him a mere breathing of the vital structure. It is true that a breathing creature speaks, and occasionally a word came in the shape of a Dean or a Bishop that seemed to him worthy of memory. He regarded the breathing as important

as a sign of life, even as a great physician pays homage to the life-play in his patient. His one fear was lest the life should cease, and therefore he was a Conservative, and abhorred any form of politics which, in any extreme form, might tamper with the living continuity of the Cathedral. To him, King Henry VIII was a perpetual model of what a king should not be ; to him, the Lord Protector was a scoundrel, but (to be just) he felt a contempt for certain eighteenth and early nineteenth century Deans and Prelates, who had neglected their great charge. They were worse than Henry, more evil than Oliver, since they had buried their talent without even wrapping it up ; nay, even, had left it about for knaves to play with. Plunderers are villains, but there are worse men.

Mr. Heaviside regarded the new Bishop with suspicion at first. He was obviously a Radical, and probably a Bolshevik. He had an unseemly habit of jesting. He was so familiar that at any moment he might become vulgar. But the view gradually changed. He found that a Radical is not necessarily an iconoclast. He made cautious inquiries of Dr. Battle, and learnt that the new Bishop was a ripe scholar. He found that he knew the history of the Cathedral in a fashion that no other Bishop had ever known it. He discovered the Bishop in the Cathedral at strange hours, investigating strange spots. He saw that very slowly reforms in structural matters were coming, that the body of the great building was being tested for weakness, for unrevealed beauty spots, for historical revelations at every turn ; that new frescoes were being unveiled, that wonderful manuscripts were emerging from forgotten chests ; that the musty library was being turned into a comfortable place of study ; that a

great organist was found for the pre-Reformation organ. He realised that a quiet force was at play, which was giving new life to the old spiritual organism. So he was converted, and became the Bishop's familiar. The Cathedral, weary of lazy Bishops and Deans, had spoken, and this new man was the word.

'Heaviside,' said the Bishop on that mid-winter evening, 'as I am going to detain you for a considerable time in my library, I must ask you to sit down, and, as I want to smoke myself, I must ask you to do the same. We shall be undisturbed. The dreadful fact of this bending to the Mammon of Tobacco and sitting in the presence of a Prince of the Church shall not be revealed. You know a great deal more of the Cathedral than I do. I am going to pick your brains. What is all this nonsense about the rifling of our most precious tomb and about the Cathedral ghost?' 'My lord,' said Mr. Heaviside respectfully, as he took a seat and lit the cigar which had been handed to him, 'My lord, your lordship is pleased to call it nonsense. There let, if your lordship pleases, the matter rest.' 'It is not nonsense, then, Heaviside?' said the Bishop. 'Does it walk?' 'It walks, my lord.' The Bishop stood up and whistled. 'Well, I have always taken you for a sane and sober man, Heaviside, a man of judgement and discretion, and yet——' 'I have served this Cathedral all my life, my lord. Here I was a choir-boy when Dr. Truelove was Bishop. By him I was confirmed. I had been christened by his predecessor, the holder of the see who erected the terrible pinnacle in the west end. I was married by his successor two months before he was removed by a providential hand from the scene of his projected reconstruction of the nave. My nine children were

all. . . .’ ‘No, no, Heaviside, I do not want your credentials. You are a pillar of the Cathedral, and yet you believe. . . .’ ‘My lord, I understand your lordship. At first I thought that your lordship was pleased to be facetious, as my first Dean, who laid down a vast store of wine, used to say to Dr. Truelove. But I understand your lordship. Your lordship is not unnaturally incredulous. It walks, my Lord ; it walks to-night on the eight hundredth anniversary of its translation, and it walks without a head.’ ‘What,’ said the Bishop, almost angrily, ‘what, are you mad or ill, Heaviside, my man ?’ ‘I can say no more, my lord ; I have but said as much since your lordship was pleased to take me into your confidence in view of my humble knowledge of our Cathedral. I crave pardon, and withdraw.’ Rising with a dignified bow, the Head Verger turned towards the door. The Bishop brought him back. ‘All that *you* know it is my duty to know. Be seated once again and go on with your cigar and let me put my questions. Is this associated with the rifling of 1917 ?’ The Verger bowed his head. ‘Do you know anything about that rifling ?’ Again Mr. Heaviside bent his head. ‘What portion of the saint’s remains were removed ?’ ‘The sacred head, my lord.’ ‘Do you know where the head is ?’ It is in Canon Snatchett’s library, my lord, in a silver box on his writing-table.’ ‘Canon Snatchett, I understand, is writing a monograph on the saint ?’ ‘It is now passing through the press, my lord.’ ‘Do you mean to tell me that the ghost walks without a head ?’ ‘I have walked with it, my lord, sat near it, have been, I believe, blessed by it, both in the Precincts and in the Cathedral by the violated tomb. For hours between midnight and dawn it stands beneath

Canon Snatchett's window with outstretched arms. It is accompanied by a dog, black, vast, minatory, ominous. I have sometimes feared lest it should do our good Canon an injury.' 'Does Canon Snatchett know of this?' 'He suspects it, my lord, and his unhappy wife knows it. Fortunately all the children are at school.' 'I don't believe a word of it, Heaviside; shadows and fancy, that is all. Can you call for me here at midnight? I want to see some moonlight effects in the Cathedral.' 'I will be here, my lord,' and the Head Verger passed out of the room, with almost the quiet celerity of a ghost.

Scarcely had he gone when the Bishop called him back with a ringing voice full of a sudden decision. 'Heaviside, are your two big sons at home?' 'They are, my lord.' 'Take them into the Cathedral and open the rifled tomb. It is easy to open. I shall meet you in the Cathedral a little before midnight.' 'My lord, I will at once proceed to the Deanery and secure. . . .' 'You will do nothing of the sort. I will bear all responsibility. It is a deed of justice.' The Verger looked at him with amazed, understanding eyes, and then, recollecting himself, inclined his head and glided away. When the Verger had really gone the Bishop quickly left the room, flung on an overcoat, and hastened across the snowy green from the Palace to the house in the Precincts where Canon Snatchett lived. Mr. Snatchett was returning by the last train; would his lordship see Mrs. Snatchett? Mrs. Snatchett welcomed the genial Bishop, asked the reason of the late hasty call, and nervously inquired if there were a dog outside. 'Yes,' said the Bishop, 'I saw a black dog and a tall, muffled man, possibly in a khaki overcoat, waiting about.' Mrs. Snatchett

sighed and turned pale. The Bishop looked keenly at her and found her shudder contagious. 'I don't think you need explain,' said the Bishop. 'The ring removed from the tomb held a Gnostic gem bearing the sign of the Dog-God, a black and terrible beast. You have talked with your husband and grown fanciful. There is nothing in it.' 'I am frightened to death.' 'I know you are. That is why I have called for the silver box and the other relics. I know that Mr. Snatchett will be furious, but, after all, I am not to be denied. I must ask for these stolen goods.' The Bishop spoke firmly. 'Will it end it?' 'It will end the absurd fancy.' The Bishop left the house with his treasure. He noticed, as he walked towards the Cathedral, that the Man and the Dog followed him, moving slowly from the house.

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A quarter before midnight: the Cathedral chimes resonantly struck the approach of the inevitable hour, and the sound boomed out to the hills from the shining snowy roofs where the moonlight painted the fine silver of the wintry scene. A silence followed that might have been the silence of winter on a primeval Alp. The cold world had no touch of warm, human hope and fear, laughter and tears. The only touch of man was one yellow window in the Precincts. Mr. Snatchett had returned and was going to bed. His wife was asleep. The Canon was nervous and sleepy, and, as he came through the Precincts, he had been startled by a great black dog which had crossed his path and looked at him with an ominous, furtive eye, that shone yellow in the moonlight. To his astonishment the dog suddenly left him, and, ambling towards the Cathedral,

entered by the great south door. It was as plain as possible in the full moonlight, and he noticed, with a shudder, that the huge beast with lolling tongue threw no shadow. The Canon, for his sins, was an Egyptologist. He was thankful to be home, but gave one peep at the Cathedral before seeking the safety of sleep. To his astonishment the stately building was full of light, and he detected the thrill of the ancient organ, and, presently, the sound of a choir reciting the psalter, a sound which changed to the ominous dirge, *Domine, ne in furore*, sung by men, and, again, to the *Placebo*, the Evensong of the Dead. Suddenly the Canon realized that the ancient Office for the Dead was being celebrated in the Cathedral, the Office as it was celebrated in the Middle Ages when a Canon lay dead in the Precincts. Cold as he was, he stood at the window fascinated. That he was witnessing some scene wafted up the ages he did not doubt. He tore himself from the window, and, hustling himself into a dressing-gown, returned to the scene just at the moment when the great clock of the Cathedral boomed out the hour of midnight. It was a strange and wonderful scene that he watched. The moon was at the full, and the light that streamed through the painted windows of the Cathedral was spiritualized by the pale beams and cast on the snowy Precincts vague tinted figures of saints, martyrs, and confessors. To the east stood that strange, round building of unknown date, which the monks had made into a *Columbarium*. Above it hovered myriads of white birds, shining like wheeling spirits in the moonlight. From out this building came a strange procession of monks, black-hooded, bearing tapers that burned in ghostly fashion. Behind them came something carried,

covered with a red cloth on which a white cross shone, and this was followed by a company of priests chanting—

‘Vestris nostra damus :
Pro nostris vestra rogamus.’

Behind the procession stalked a solitary tall figure, radiant in the moonlight, with aureoled brows, and with him a great dog with lowered head. The procession moved slowly through the snow, and, entering the Cathedral by the southern door, vanished. It seemed hours to Mr. Snatchett, but even yet the Cathedral clock was striking. Indeed, it was but the fifth stroke when the whole wall of the Cathedral became transparent, and the unhappy Canon found himself looking at the grave that he had rifled. Strange mediaeval figures were standing round the open tomb. He remembered that only that day he had found and read a new record of the inhumation of the Saint, and now it was re-enacted. Again the *Placebo* was chanted, and suddenly there was a crash as of thunder, and he saw, in a final flashing of light, the great slab of the tomb fall into its place as the Cathedral clock struck its last note.

At this instant a hand was placed on his shoulder, and, the limits of human endurance being reached, he shrieked. It was his wife. ‘You are late, Henry,’ said that lady with some asperity of manner. ‘It is past twelve o’clock. Why are you looking out of the window? It is a good thing that you *are* home. There have been dreadful happenings here. The relics of the saint have been removed by the Cathedral authorities, and it may be that proceedings before the Ecclesiastical Court will follow. Have you not heard the front-door bell ringing? It has

awakened me from the first honest sleep I have had for two years. You must go to the door. *I cannot, and the servants, even if they are awake, cannot in these dreadful circumstances.*' Mr. Snatchett, without a word, went down stairs with the lamp, leaving his wife in the dark. The bell was still pealing. It had a human, homely sound. He unbolted the door and threw it open. He found standing there the imperturbable figure of Mr. Jasper Heaviside, the Head Verger. 'I am sorry to disturb you at this hour, Mr. Snatchett, but I am expressly commissioned by his lordship to convey to you his compliments, and to ask you to call upon him without fail at ten o'clock to-morrow morning. He also directed me to add these words to his message: *Beatus cui remissum delictum, cujus obductum est peccatum.* The night is cold, sir; I trust that you are well.' The Head Verger gravely bowed, and, turning, moved serenely across the snowy scene so lately occupied by other and less substantial figures of the night.

DEMETER OF CNIDOS

THE Rev. Michael Spratt, the Rector of Henbury-in-the-Marsh and Senior Fellow of the only Oxford College that, in his opinion, had maintained the true succession of learning, was of such immense age that he was thwarted in his attempt to reach Oxford and vote for the retention of compulsory Greek. His college living lay far down in the West, and the old gentleman found that the journey to London had so far exhausted him that it was impossible for him to go on in any leisurely comfort. He had thought of the cross-country journey, but he found that that was quite impossible. So, being of an equable disposition, with no desire for company, he dined at the Athenaeum, having spent an hour in the British Museum, and revived his memories of the Mausoleum and of the Demeter of Cnidos. With the aid of a cup of tea he had reached Pall Mall alive, and, being comparatively restored by a dignified and subdued meal, and a glass or so of not indifferent port, he adjourned to the Reading-room, and, in the company of his learned contemporaries, fell asleep behind the camouflage of a monthly review with an orange-coloured cover. That he actually fell asleep seems beyond doubt, yet in his subsequent account of what happened, in a letter to his life-long friend, Dr. Battle, he denied with substantial energy any such phenomenon. Yet only sleep could justify what apparently happened in the most respectable spot in that part of London. Near him sat a

Bishop of his own age, worn out with the study of the writings of St. Augustine on the subject of re-marriage after divorce, a study undertaken for the purposes of a forthcoming debate on Divorce. Close to the fire sat a bearded Dean, with the proofs in his lap of his forthcoming volume on the papyrus-fragments of Erinna: he was nodding the metre. On the other side of the fire was a retired Judge of the highest reputation. In his hands were the paged proofs of his work on *The Flexibility of the Common Law Illustrated from History, Demonstrated from Practice*. In a corner reclined a very distinguished Fellow of the Royal Society. The index finger of his right hand was upon his forehead, his eyes gazed into what may have been vacancy. The members among whom Mr. Spratt sat were, in fact, irreproachable. They represented all that was best in English intellectual life. Moreover, they never spoke to one another, but thought and thought and thought. Mr. Spratt kept murmuring to himself, 'Mausoleum, Mausoleum, Mausoleum.' The words seemed to fascinate him, inappropriate as they were to the room in which he sat. The four syllables seemed to make a sort of rhythm, a hammering of hooves, and yet (he declares) he never fell asleep.

It was at this interesting moment that the most amazing thing in the history of any club in Pall Mall happened. Mr. Spratt explains it in his emphatic way: 'While I was thinking about the disastrous Oxford vote, I heard a quiet rustling as it were of wings or dresses, and, looking up, I saw standing before me, with out-thrust sword and extended shield, which did not hide the terrible flashing of her eyes and the scornful distension of her nostrils, an armed and fearsome woman, the drapery of whose

garments fluttered like wings as she advanced on me with dreadful purpose. I am old, and I knew that my end could not be long delayed ; but this was not the end I looked for, though I have always felt that the war between the sexes might be renewed. However, I quickly reconciled myself to the inevitable, and prepared for the fatal blow without hesitation. I thought that if I moved she might miss the vital spot and so subject me to unnecessary agony.' The old gentleman went on to express his astonishment that none of his companions took the slightest notice of this terrible intrusion. The Fellow of the Royal Society was seeing visions, but he did not see her. The student of Erinna nodded over his texts, the Bishop quoted, half aloud, an early opinion of St. Augustine in favour of remarriage after divorce, and a late opinion against the same catastrophe, while the ex-Judge opened and shut his eyes three several times. Only the Senior Fellow saw the Amazon as she stood there, fresh from the Skopatian chisel. ' I said to myself, after observing the indifference of my companions, that it must be a dream, and at this moment she lowered her shield, and, striking that bronze instrument with her short, bronze, broad sword, with a fearful clang, she said : Δεῦρο παρ' ἡμᾶς, δεσπότισκε, which I took to mean, " Come along o' me, little Governor," and, as I rose to follow, her dreadful countenance assumed a certain benignancy of manner, I seemed even to detect a kindly twinkle of the eyes, and she strode out of the Club, exclaiming in Greek, " The Divine Demeter has sent for you." In the recesses of the entrance to the Club a cohort of Amazons was waiting, and one after another these desperate creatures looked at me with the evident intention of smiting me and carrying off my bleeding

corpse upon their locked shields. I really believe, my dear Battle, that it was the statue of Athena above the Club entrance that saved me. I extended my arms to that divine lady (for I felt that my own religion was practically useless in these desperate pre-Christian circumstances) and addressed her in the best ancient Greek. My guard was evidently moved, and when she gave the order to march I was no longer threatened by the swords of these desperate women.

‘Probably no other man has ever seen London under such circumstances, and I should point out that London, on that occasion, despite the talk of overcrowding and congested traffic, was a desert. I was the only man visible in our long march. Some of the hideous mounted statuary of London ambled about the by-streets, but, as I marched under guard from the Duke of York’s column to Lord Nelson’s monument, and thence to the Embankment, under Waterloo Bridge, up Middle Temple Lane to the Strand and to the new Kingsway, and so to Holborn, and thence to the British Museum, London was absolutely silent and deserted. No doubt the population was lying *perdu* with extinguished lights in view of this terrible raid of Amazons. For the first time in my life I obtained a sense of the greatness of London. The absence of hideous vehicles and ill-dressed women and men speaking a horrible polyglot tongue, with raucous voices, revealed a very great and beautiful city. Had it not been for an occasional and painful thrust from the boss of the shield immediately behind me, I should have enjoyed the walk through an empty London, under the moonlight and the eternal stars. There was but a sighing of the wind, a crying of owls, and, by the mysterious riverside, the souging

of the high tide at the turn rustling under bridges and by water-gates out to the open sea. The gliding river was alive, and seemed a link, in its mysterious flood, between our England and the shining Isles of Greece. Once only did we see anything human. The noble buildings that we passed were shrouded with the silence of many ages. London had evidently died in the night, and was one with Nineveh and Tyre. The Embankment and Temple Gardens were full of springtime life on this warm evening. It was the beginning of the vegetation that would rapidly spread over and hide the one-time Metropolis of the world. As I went along I was convinced that this was no dream, that I was actually witnessing the last stage of the greatest city of all time. It was when we ascended Kingsway, a strange procession if there had been anyone to see it, that the only human touch became noticeable. Where Kingsway meets Lincoln's Inn Fields we paused for a moment, and the Amazons around me struck their swords on their shields and broke out into wild dithyrambic song, and as suddenly ceased. It was a call to the Children of Spring. Looking east at the early leafage of the Fields, I saw what appeared to be an immense army of children forming into ranks, and I heard the springtime murmur of innumerable voices hushed to the pitch of expectation. My sense of hope awakened, for these were plainly English children; but the glimpse was momentary, for my brutal guide struck me on the head with her shield and I almost lost consciousness. The next thing that I remember was the opening, without the agency of hands, of the gates of the British Museum. There were no policemen there, but on the steps we were met by the Monster from Easter Island, who appeared to

be acting as guardian of the treasures of the Museum. The Amazons received his clumsy salutations with something of the hauteur with which they treated me.

‘ Unlike the rest of London, the Museum seemed to be alive. Gracious figures moved from hall to hall, Praxitelean creatures full of youth and life. They gazed curiously at me, as curiously as I had often gazed at them in the days when I was a student of Greek art. An athlete touched me with his finger-tip, and when I addressed him in his native tongue he shuddered. So I was brought to the place where the great Demeter sits, or, I should say, sat, for she was standing as I approached and, at the impressive suggestion of my guide, flung myself at her feet. My nervous system had entirely broken down, but one dominant thought, by some strange chance, kept me sane. Now if ever was the opportunity to discover if she really was from the chisel of Skopas. I had never doubted the fact. No one but Skopas could have wrought that wonderful face, those deep, piercing eyes, that infinite wealth of tender motherhood emanating from her serene countenance, that drapery which, even in the stone, was folded with the soft carelessness of a human garment. But now she moved, breathed, and glowed with essential being. To her the childhood of the world could look, and, looking, long for her love. As I peered up from my prostrate position at this wonderful creature, I realized (I dare say to you, my old friend ?) for the first time the significance of the Greek civilization and all that it had meant and might have meant to the civilization which, that night, I had seen in its death-throe. I saw her raise her hand, and the Amazons became Greek children playing at ball in the Great Hall.

Their weapons had vanished ; they were the children that Skopas had seen. Presently she bade me, with a gracious motion, to rise, and I stood face to face with the Mother of the World.

“ “ You are a stranger,” she said in the most musical Greek I had ever heard, “ but I have sent for you, in rough fashion I am afraid, as I believe that you belong to the priesthood of your people, have some knowledge of my tongue, and are, or ought to be, a teacher and lover of little children.” “ So much so, gracious Lady,” I said in hushed tones, “ that but yesterday I was speeding to our university in order to secure the compulsory acquisition, by the choicest spirits of my race, of your divine tongue. I was by an accident unable to fulfil my desire, and some three hundred other priests were also, by some similar accident, or the increased cost of transit due to the late war, prevented from doing their duty. I have learnt with grief, and, I confess, with shame, that we have failed to retain your musical and serene language as part of our necessary studies.” “ It was by my action that you were all prevented. I sent my messengers abroad and caused the accidents of which you complain. No longer did I need your help. I used you so long as it suited my universal purpose, but henceforth you will serve me in other fashion. I have sent my spirit into the hearts of the people whom you, despite your pedagogy, have never taught to love me, and they are coming to me, coming for the love of beauty, of song, of hope. You, my false servant, gave my bounty to the few. It is my will that it be given to the many. If the many learn to love me, to love all that my chosen people wrought with voice and pen and brush and chisel, to love the beauty and the goodness which was Greece, will they not readily learn the

tongue in which Sappho, my Sappho, and sweet Erinna sing ? ”

‘ As the goddess said these things my conscience smote me, for I remembered a conversation that I once had had with Mark Pattison. I had dwelt on the absurdity of throwing open the University to the poor, to the impossibility indeed of doing it. I remember now the withering scorn with which he snapped out his acid reply : ‘ We have never tried.’ While the words of the goddess were still ringing in my mind the memory flashed up, and I could but bow my head. Then she went on : ‘ Some seek me now without your aid. All will seek me soon. The event that has moved my godhead was the worship of a little child. It is not long since that I observed, day by day, a little ragged creature who came peering through the hall, a little wild rebel from the dens that you call homes. And every day, ere he departed, he came and gazed fixedly at me with some strange longing in his wonderful wide eyes. Then he was away for a time, and I missed his longing heart, and I sent out into your dark city my hunger for his presence. And soon he came with a little black sign of mourning on his arm. I knew that he had lost his toil-worn mother. And for him my godhead yearned. He came, dirty, uncared for, ragged, and in his little hot hands was a tiny bunch of fading violets. He came to me and looked upon me, and presently he put the violets at my feet, and, sitting down with crossed legs beneath my hungry eyes, he wept, as human children weep, wept till he fell asleep. So was my godhead moved. So has my call gone forth. Can you hear them coming ? ’ ”

‘ Even as she spoke I heard again the murmur of innumerable voices, and they sounded fresh and

pleasant, as water in a desert land. The music filled the halls, and soon I saw them coming; not ragged children, but children full of health and happiness, rosy as the apple-blossom, gay as the lark, earnest as the startled fawn. They were the new generation of whom I had never thought; they were the New England for which I had prayed and had not had your faith in trying to create. Demeter looked at me and smiled. All might have been well had not my incurable curiosity ruined all. Was she of Cnidos, the Demeter of Skopas? She saw my thought. "I am," said she, "the Child of Beauty, the Mother of Love. But you, *ἔρρ' ἀπ' ἐμεῖο, βωκόλε*, get out, you blockhead." And then, in an instant, overwhelmed by a dancing sea of sunlit faces, I was trampled down by the New Generation, and, losing consciousness, remembered no more till I awakened at my little lodging in Bloomsbury.'

THE ACADIAN

THE war was over, at any rate for this Canadian soldier, and before returning home he determined to visit certain shrines that still called for him. The first was the one-day pilgrimage from London that the Chaucerians undertook, the pilgrimage to Greenwich to the shrine of Aelfeah, or Aelfege, of Canterbury, a pilgrimage that every good Acadian takes. The second was not the week's pilgrimage to Canterbury, the pilgrimage of the *Tales*, but one further afield, to a village on a moor many miles west, to a village very different from the vill of Greenwich, though that, too, once lay on the edge of the wild where the Anderidean forest sloped down to the murmurous, meadowed Thames. First, then, for Greenwich.

The pilgrim took with him an antiquarian, and they walked from London Bridge that late April afternoon. The Thames, as they crossed the bridge, swam lustily eastward past the bastioned Tower on the north, past the quiet wharves of Shakespeare's land on the south, and so they went on, leaving the moral Gower dreaming in St. Saviour's, and pushed their way east as near the riverside as might be, through the throb of spring-time traffic, with the children dancing in streets that did not seem drab at all on this shining afternoon, and on through Southwark, past little parks where the grey-green spring had come, and so on into Deptford near to the Church of St. Nicholas, where the dead Admirals

keep their proud watch, where the dust is the dust of fighting men who made England the mistress of the seas, the church of Drake and Frobisher and of their stern successors ; and so still on up Old Church Street past the little chapel where Benjamin Disraeli worshipped as a child, and thus into the roaring Deptford Broadway, and so up Blackheath Hill on to the Heath, where the ghosts of Jack Cade and Dick Turpin keep watch and ward though they know not each other. By the time they reached Blackheath the sunset had begun, and as they entered Greenwich Park they moved into a mystic, silent, wooded world of glamorous light and shadow.

As they came the twain had talked much and had observed men and manners, but now in the loneliness of the Park a silence fell. The long avenues of stately trees, age, and an infinite tradition putting on the wonderfulness of youth in the new passion of one more spring, the stretches of sward clean and shining, the quietude of the bosky groves, the sense of treading places that men had trodden in familiar fashion since the days of the Romans, laid the burden of historic memory upon the pilgrims. They struck through the fresh grass over to the Bower of Queen Elizabeth, where the Roman tavern or villa once stood, and paused under the trees thinking of the Sixtieth Legion that had camped here on its way to meet the Island Queen, Boadicea. Here the sentinels stood. From that height, centurions watched the winding Thames, watched the hills to the south, where the dark-rolling forest lay. Just by here the oldest Roman road had run, and up it in the opening fourth century the Christian Bishop of London, Restitutius, must have passed on mule-back seaward and toward Arles. And then they moved on to Wren's Observatory, where old Duke Humphrey's

castle had stood, the castle that Cromwell was to capture, and looked down on the spot where Elizabeth had been born in the Palace of Placentia, the site of the home of the great line of English kings from perhaps the thirteenth to almost the eighteenth century, looked down on the old Hospital that Wren had built at the bidding of a Queen for the men who had made England what it is.

'The place is alive with history, but what part have I in it?' He had forgotten for a moment, but his friend touched his arm and said, 'Come with me.' They retraced their steps down the great, darkling, but moonstruck avenue, and then, turning off to the right, moved through uneven ground, among the ghostly tumuli of the Bronze Age, where sleep the earliest fighters for Britain. Lights were shining from a brick-built house, and his friend said, 'James Wolfe lived there.' Then they passed out of a mysterious postern gate in the moon-touched eve, leaving the ghostly deer browsing in the twilight, and wandered down Croom's Hill, perhaps the oldest named hill near London, one looking back to pre-historic days. Down they went into the dusk that 'unseen hands' were hanging around them, the hands, as it seemed, of an immemorial past, until suddenly they struck the crash of traffic again, and passed out of it into the shrine where they would be. Presently they stood above the spot where the man who had wooed and won the Acadian land lies, all that is mortal of him.

'How old are you?' whispered the Englishman. 'Thirty-three years old,' said the Acadian. 'I was twenty-nine when the war began.' 'James Wolfe,' said the Englishman, 'had won all when he was thirty-three; he took up arms as a boy. He fought at Dettingen and Fontenoy; he was one of

Marlborough's men. He fought at Falkirk and Culloden; in 1757 he was in the expedition against Rochefort. In 1758 he was in Acadia. Then he came home here to the house on the hill. They say that on the day he left he had his last meal at the little inn across the green in Hyde Vale, and then he sailed to relieve Quebec. People here were afraid of this melancholy young man. Someone told the old King that he was a mad dog. "I wish that he would bite some of my generals," quoth the King. Quebec was an old town even then. It was founded, wasn't it, in 1608? On September 13, 1759, James Wolfe won the Heights of Abraham, relieved Quebec, founded the British Empire, thanked God, and died content. But they brought him home to England on *The Royal William*. The body was brought ashore at Portsmouth on November 17, 1759, and at midnight on November 20, 1759, it was laid beneath us here in the church that stands on the place where Aelfege died for justice. You see, I know, we all know, your history.' At that moment, through the gloom of the great church, there ran a tremor of music from the old pre-Reformation organ; someone was practising, and the voluntary seemed to link up with silver notes the immemorial past with some wonderful future full of golden hopes and splendid deeds. Alive with ghosts seemed the old church, full of hopes and dreams and visions, and the Acadian found himself understanding on this spot where Aelfege had died for justice, and therefore, as Anselm said, for Christ, why it was that Acadia had given so much to make justice the basis of a new and better world.

The other pilgrimage was to a wild and wonderful western moor where men and women still live in the

quietude of centuries ago. To a man accustomed all his life to great forest lands, to wide horizons and splendid roaring waters, to a man who had grown up among the things of a world in the making, and had earned a livelihood in the forest primeval, turning the timeless labours of nature to the patient purposes of man, there was something of home in these wild, wind-swept spaces where the deer are still wild, where the little horses are the children of nature, nurtured in freedom, where the stone farmhouses are as they have been for centuries, where the broad, high-cheek-boned faces tell the traveller that here were a prehistoric people who owned the land in days before there were kings or Parliaments, armies, or great cities. Here in the little island that the Acadian felt was small indeed he was suddenly faced by the mystery of the wild. He smelt it as he strode across the moor. He knew this mystery, this silence that underlay the buffet of the wind or the thrash of the rain or the cry of the curlew, a silence which is the mother of all natural sounds, a quietness of heart which is the gift and glory of nature, but something which is only revealed to the few select and faithful souls who find in nature a reality which is redolent of God. So he strode on and fancied he was at home; that the next bend of the billowy moor would bring him to a little ridge where the abundant pines guard a swift river where the salmon are, and hold a little clearing as an army might hold a little city, a little clearing where there are cattle and closed corn-fields, and a home. So he strode on. He felt that a salmon-river was near, and presently he saw it; saw, too, a stone house in a little farmstead. 'This must be the place,' he said to himself, 'where the old cousins live. I never thought,' he went on to himself, talking aloud as people talk who have lived

alone in the wild, 'I never thought that old England had anything so young in it. Greenwich is so old. In its park the ghosts are hustling one another. But here it is all as young as Acadia.' So, talking to himself, he turned into the little farmstead just at sunset on this lovely April evening, when the thrush was thrilling in the purple hedge. As he went in a girl carrying a basket of primroses, a basket brimming with gold minted by nature, came in behind him. He was so deep in thought that he never heard her. She laughed quietly to herself. 'This,' said she, 'this is Cousin James, for whom we have been looking.' There was a light in one of the windows which seemed almost like a reflection of the sunset as it struck its last rays across the moor out of a cumulus which was a palace in heaven, a Placentia of the skies. He knocked with his stick on the door, three hearty knocks, and the loud knocking awakened him and brought him to himself. Presently there was a movement within, and some women's voices were heard speaking in broad accents. 'It be not Mary, be it?' Then someone came to the door and opened it, a little old woman who looked as if she had come out of an old picture. Behind her there were standing two other old ladies who looked as if they, too, had stepped out of a picture, so neat and unperturbed were they. 'Is this Miss Brayle's farm?' said the soldier stoutly, but not too stoutly, because he knew well enough that he was home at last. 'I do believe that it be he, Susannah,' said the first old lady. 'Up and speak to he, Maria,' said the second old lady. 'I be sure it be he, Sarah.' 'Supper be ready if it be he,' said Sarah; 'it be ready if Mary be back.' But no answer had been given to the waiting soldier. Then Mary intervened. 'Be you James Brayle?' said

she, 'for if you be James Brayle I be your cousin Mary Brayle, and ready for supper, as I do not doubt you be.' 'Yes, I am James Brayle,' said the soldier, 'and. . . .'

But before he could say more the first little old lady came up to him and pulled his face down to her and kissed it. She said no word. Then Maria came and kissed the bent head, and Sarah, bustling back from the kitchen, came and caught him by the ears, and pulled the head lower and kissed him tenderly. Then one old lady took one hand and another old lady the other, and they led him in, a damp-faced, speechless warrior, to the great kitchen, and Sarah pushed him into a great flock chair. 'There be thy gramfer opposite thee on the wall. Thou beest James Brayle right enough.' And Mary, who knew her aunts and had been enjoying the scene, turned a lamp first on the Acadian and then on the wall. It might have been his veritable portrait. He had come home indeed. 'Take hot water to the bedroom, Mary. He must not talk till he has washed and rested. The sheets be aired, James; they have been aired for days, James. Nay, do not speak. Go thee and wash.' So the young man was led by ancient Sarah up a winding stair to a room that looked out over the moor, and when he was alone he lay down on the bed, and first laughed and then (do not doubt it) cried like a child. He was at home. 'My God,' he sobbed, 'home!'

He never will forget, among the sounds of his native waters or amid the snows and pines of his great and wonderful land, that evening; that Gargantuan feast of meats and hams and pasties and cream and jams. He will remember the faded photographs, the old silver, the spotless cloth, the old paintings of Brayles dead and gone, and, above

all, the yearning tenderness of the old ladies who had known his dead mother when she was a toddling girl on the moor, the old ladies who were full of talk, and snippets of song, and tender praise of fighting men. They treated him as a baby, as a little boy home from school, while Mary sat and smiled and listened. He seemed to himself suddenly to have come out of the riot and terrors of war into the quietness of a great and holy peace. It was worth fighting for, he thought. He was wrong when he said to himself that the moor was young. It was as old as Greenwich, and as full of ghosts. All homes are old and tender, but they beget youth, and this was his home, his link, as Greenwich was his nation's link, with the dear Motherland. The little old ladies beamed on him when he bade them good-night. 'James,' they said, 'we have put a hot-water bottle in your bed, and a lavender bundle under your pillow. Good-night, James.' And Mary laughed and laughed like rippling water. It was good to listen to her laughing. James still heard her from his open window as he looked across the mystic moor at the westering moon.

THE THUNDER-STORM

ON the moor the first week in July ushers in no premonition of autumn. The luxuriance of growth is at its height in splendid defiance of winters past and to come. The seven-foot bracken, in its grey, cool shade, could hide an army and still shine in innocence through its leagues of brilliant green. There is even a touch of a spring wind in the air, saying, as it were, midsummer is yet to come. It is only the woodland foliage which betrays the fact that now is the prime, now is the perfect moment. The woodland is always worthy of praise, a revelation of realities of beauty which exist outside the imaginings of men. If man were not he would have to become in order to watch those realities. It was, indeed, through watching them and adjusting his soul to them that he became what he is. The naked trees of winter patterning with infinite variations the dying eves of mystery ; the grey green of the spring-time woodland aisles melting into apple-green tinted twilights ; the profuse leafage, red and gold and bronze, aloft or fallen, through endless avenues of fairyland, sun-swept as the autumn cumuli march on,—all these have stamped their wonders into the receptive souls of thousands of generations of men. But there is a moment in summer when the mystery of the moor and the woodland has its crisis, so to speak, a crisis that prehistoric man discovered, as the festival of St. John's Eve, with its fires and dancing, leaping figures, testifies. Then the fairies

and the gnomes and the spirits of nature are abroad, and man himself walks mysteriously amid mysteries of which he himself, as part of nature, is not the least. The vision of the woodland from a bracken-bowered hill tells him that for this eve at least there are realities which stand eternally around and pitifully watch the struggle and the strife of things. Here on the hill it is broad daylight, but yet not the light of common day, for the sun is behind the woodland at last, and the lines of trees, winding and climbing through valley and borough, take strange, weird shapes, with mysterious lights around them and unfamiliar lights within them, mystery melting into mystery. With something almost of fear the moorland traveller passes homeward from the open heath to the forest aisles, where the infinite distances twinkle with inexplicable lights and ring with tiny sounds which are the bugle-calls of the midsummer hosts.

On such an evening the motor-omnibus, which had been installed for a summer service between the tiny cathedral town of Wiltchester and the substantial village of Wiltwater, bumped happily on its way. It was the last journey, and not a remunerative one, since there was, on the last stage, only one passenger, a soldier, a worn but alert-looking man, coming home at last with much accoutrement. The driver and the conductor were both ex-soldiers. The last village before the long run up to Wiltwater began had almost emptied the vehicle. It seemed hardly worth the run, but there were probably a few folk to bring back in the morning. The conductor came in and sat with the soldier. They compared notes, had fought (so they found) in the same battles. 'There be something about this 'bus I do zeem to know,' said the soldier. 'I do zeem to smell something

about she that do veel vriendly-like. This 'bus, mate, wur she in France?' 'She wur,' said the conductor, lighting a woodbine. 'Now do 'ee mark I,' said the soldier with a curious flash of his eyes, 'I do zay I do know this 'bus. Just 'ee wait. When we wur in the covered lane wi' all hell loose above we, round we, 'mong we, while we did wait, I did hide what I did feel, hunger for this bit o' green hill and the wowd cottage and the twurning ov the lane whur the honeyzuckle be—be there any now?—while we did wait I did carve my name, "B. Multon," in the back o' the bus. Turn a light, mate.' The conductor struck a match, and there under the new paint they made out the letters. 'It be wonnerful strange,' said the conductor. 'I wur in that same covered lane, my God I wur, and so wur Bert wot's drivin'. He wur drivin' then. I wur waiting same as you wur waiting. 'Twur hell, waiting.' 'Do 'ee 'member,' said the soldier, 'the gun-team ahead? Did 'ee see they horses go up that bank screeching wi' a shell bursting behind they, 'tween they and we busmen, an' a shell bursting in front o' they? They got the gun up anyway, they did. They horses wur not human, they *wur not*, they climbed a cliff they did and put the gun in action.' 'Twur true,' said the conductor grimly. 'Twur a trap o' hell, that road.'

The 'bus murmured away uphill in the twilight. The load was light and the 'bus seemed pleased with the company that it carried, and buzzed its consciousness of old friends. At last they were on the height and the 'bus stopped. The driver got down for a moment, lifted the bonnet, and looked at the engine. Then he came to the rear and lit his pipe. 'Wonnerful old 'bus,' he said. 'I wur in she out in France, hilly country like this. Do 'ee ever think

o' that night, Bill, or have 'ee forgotten it, stayin' on in the Hunland? To think we be all three alive.' He spat for luck and stuck his hands in his pockets. 'Bill and I just been talking 'bout it. Didn't know it wur Bill till just now, wi' all the volk.' 'I knew he as soon as I saw he, but no time to talk. Just 'ee look, Bill. Bean't it zweet to zee it all again? But it be just here like it wur there that night. Do 'ee zee? Look 'ee.' He waved his hand. They had come up a road well camouflaged by nature from the sky. A little way ahead they would enter such another road, deep cut, but at this spot there was a wide outlook on the land, on the broad endless valley winding away seaward, on the vast woods weirdly outlined in the first twilight, a wonderful vision of strange shapes sharp-cut against the sunset. The great heat of the day had not gone with the failing light, a light failing rather from the sudden uprush of thunder-clouds than from the actual end of day. The closeness of the atmosphere betokened the coming of the storm. An intense stillness seemed to close them in, a frightened calling bird, a grey hen, gave the only sound. The clouds were moving high up, but the wind had not come down yet, unless the blast of heat was the moving force. Presently there ran across the sky a splitting zigzag, far off but intense, and out of the distant woods there came the deep, low grumble, with endless echoes, of the moving storm.

'Tes time we be gettin' on,' said the driver. 'I do zeem to hear the guns, the guns, the great guns.' And he passed his hand over his head with a dreadful look of memory. He got to his seat, the men jumped in, and they were off across what literally might be called the blasted heath in that strange light, with the brilliant sunset peering in blood-red colours

through the black, scudding clouds. The wind had come at last—the wind of a furnace with the roar of a furnace. From two parts of the sky the artillery of the heavens was bursting forth. There were two storms at different levels, and they were drifting towards each other. It was a wonderful but terrible sight. The quiet landscape was transformed. All that had seemed a vision of delight had become terrible, demoniac. The interlacing flashes were rather like balls of bursting fire than the soft effulgence or the running lightning of the heavens, so often the pleasing fashion of summer storms. The thunderclaps were continuous, a distant rolling underlying the close, quick bursts of splitting sound which distinguished the nearer storm.

There was no rain. The heat was pitiless. The driver pushed on, anxious for shelter, yet afraid of the shelter of the covered lane, which might prove no shelter but rather attractive of the lightning stroke. No doubt the next stage of this weird, indeed fearful moorland drive, was the imagination of the men, who described it later with full belief in its reality. Yet who shall say that it was imagination, who shall say that the issue was not once more joined, that the 'bus which had long ago carried so many men, dead men all save these who drove across the moor, did not call up from the vasty deep the scene in which she had played her heroic part? Be that as it may, Bill Multon and his comrades will swear to the end of days that suddenly and in a moment, as the 'bus swerved into the rutted lane, she was filled to overflowing on floor and roof once more with men, grim-faced men, rifles in hand, waiting an event and listening to the multitudinous thunder of the guns. The men were being rushed to a vital point. The guns were ahead. There must have been many cars, but here the men

dismounted and formed up in the twilight lane. They seemed a great company. How far they could go without destruction they knew not. They were in the valley of the shadow of death. Presently they knew that they were detected, that the range was found, and felt as part of an eternal consciousness the crashing and bursting of cracking shells that left some of them alive and bloody. Out of the hurricane they saw the maddened horses dragging the field-gun leap up as one into the narrow heaven itself, and break through the huge hedges into more equal contest. The men who were left crept up after the horses, felt their way out of the range of hell, and scattered in the moorland fields.

The storms had reached their meeting-point in a sudden passion of rain and passing on rumbled far away among the hills and out at sea. The 'bus went on again, and after a while came out of the lane into the twilight and stopped. The three men dismounted and looked at each other. 'I knew 'un, every one on 'un, for all that they be dead. My brother Richard wur there, an' he be dead, he be. 'Twowd 'bus be haunted I do think. 'Twur good wowd 'bus.' The others said nothing. They both spat on the ground and wiped the sweat from their faces with their hands and shook it off. 'Be 'ee haunted, wowd 'bus,' said Bert, the driver, 'be 'ee overlooked? By whom be 'ee overlooked?' Then he lit his pipe.

A perfect evening had followed the storm. A sweet air had come with the rain. Nature, in her grateful fashion, had out of the turmoil and the terror derived consolation, hope, and peace. It was not dark yet. The western sky was clear, save for a bank of empurpled cloud, irregularly outlined in curious shapes that might have been disordered

armies in retreat. Above the strange phenomenon stood a single star, Venus seeking the sea in splendour. The long valley, with its rushing river, threw back in quick glints the light of the moon just risen, a moon that made shadows and silver patches between the woodland groves. It was a scene familiar to these men, their home, their goal. So they drove down into the village, and presently were talking about the storm in the homely village inn. But they said nothing about the covered road. Bert, the driver, had asked that nothing should be said until they had seen his grandmother. 'Granmer will tell we all.' The others nodded. They knew granmer, the most powerful witch in the West, but an amateur withal, who gained no livelihood out of her art. Duly refreshed, and the old 'bus duly cleaned, the three men visited first Bill Multon's home, a scene of joy too tender for a journeyman's pen, and then passed on to the outlying cottage where Bert's granmer lived. There was a light still in her window, 'She be expecting we,' said Bert. It was so, for she opened the door and beckoned them in. Hers is a commanding form, and her black hair untouched with grey, her time-defying teeth, which flash when she smiles, her penetrating eyes under the great brow, the worn, keen old face, command not only respect but obedience. 'Do 'ee come in,' said she. 'The Beasts of God be gone to sleep at last. You'm happy to be alive.' They were waved into seats before the small turf fire that the old woman fostered at all seasons. She stood and looked at the men with her dominating eyes. 'Tell all,' quoth she. When they had ended, Bert asked, 'Who did overlook the wowd 'bus, granmer?' 'Not me, nor 'nother: but He whom we do 'bey, the Father o' all spirits, did call the dead men back for our learning, as

parson do zay. He be great Conjurer be He, the Lord o' all. Let thur be Light, and thur were Light. Let thur be Peace, He do zay, or—an' He did show you Hell, the Hell o' War. But how be, make peace, keep peace? Be you all brothers, all one, wi' no anger in the land.' The old woman stood like a prophetess, and the flickering of the fire threw its glamour on the scene. 'You'm happy now, Bert. Did Richard speak, our Richard who be dead?' Bert bowed his head. "D'ee goo now. Tell mother, Richard who be dead did speak. She be full o' tears, be mother. Goo!" The dismissal was no harsh word. It had the lingering sound of a blessing, a certain sacramental comfortableness. The old woman stood in the moonlight at the door, and as their steps died down she went in and murmured to herself, 'I do love Richard; he be the flower o' the flock.' And, sitting down by the fire, she plucked her apron, wiped her eyes, and fell asleep.

THE OLD DELEGATE

THE history lecturer only just caught the train. As he recovered his breath in the dark carriage he became conscious of a wheezing and of sounds like foreign oaths. Suddenly a dim and parcimonious light came into being, and what he saw was a man whose long and bony frame occupied the length of the opposite seat. The trousers were of startling plaid; a short-cut military jacket half hid a crimson waistcoat with gold buttons; a pushed-back regimental hat or cap, apparently of the Wellingtonian period, revealed a vast, untroubled forehead which brooded over eyes brightly scintillating from puckered sockets which indicated immense age. The nose was projecting, blue, and formidable: the yellow ear had a lobe like an autumn leaf. A great military moustache shook as the thin lips trembled and muttered.

By degrees the voice grew more articulate, and the lecturer was amazed to hear the names of Metternich, Fouché, Talleyrand, Wellington, Ney, Carnot, Napoleon, Liverpool, Castlereagh, Humboldt. At last, when he heard the despairing phrase of Napoleon's sister, 'Qu'avez vous fait, Napoléon?' he coughed. The old giant sat up and swung his legs across the compartment.

'An intolerable line, sir,' he said. 'There is no brandy to be procured in the refreshment-rooms, and, had I not taken the precaution to bring, from my cellar, this bottle of 1798 brandy, my natal

brandy, I should have been lost. At my age alcohol is a necessity. It was different in 1815, though the Duke was a substantial man in the way of wine. I remember the Duchess of Richmond saying to me, a young attaché fresh from the Congress of Vienna, 'My boy, keep your head clear; we have difficult days before us.'

Adopting the direct method his companion boldly asked him his age.

'Age?' came the reply. 'I am as old as I feel, and I feel very old to-night in this draughty carriage. It is just 104 years to-day since the Congress closed, and I was then 18 years old and passed for 25.' 'Impossible,' said the other. 'Did you say impossible, sir?' The old man's moustache bristled with rage. 'I did not mean exactly impossible,' said his alarmed companion. 'I was merely expressing astonishment in, I am afraid, a somewhat uncivil form. Now I remember that in Dr. Cox's book on Parish Registers and in *The Gentleman's Magazine* instances are recorded of even greater longevity.'

'Drink,' said the pacified monster, holding out, like Caliban, his bottle of old brandy; 'drink and listen. You will never taste such brandy again. It was given to my father by the Duc de Feltre when he was a prisoner of war in France. Drink. You show a natural curiosity at seeing a figure of the old world in these interesting and remarkable days. You are asking, What has brought this man out of his den at this time of life? I will tell you.

'I am now going to Paris to see something of the Peace Conference. I shall not actually confer, though a man who has been present at every Conference since 1815 would naturally be of value. But I shall see something. I shall talk privately

with the chief delegates and warn them off the errors of Holy Alliances, Berlin Conferences, Hague Conventions. Histories are all very well, but histories do not tell the things that wreck the fondest hopes of man. Napoleon—I knew him well, that little Italian priest of a man—really meant to have a League of Nations and make Europe something better than a sink-hole of second-rate ambitions. I remember once seeing him sitting on a table with his little bent legs swinging underneath it, seeing him throwing sweets in the air and catching them in his mouth, and I can now hear him saying, “So I catch Prussia, Italy, Spain—sweets to the sweet.” He never smoked, but always had roast chicken ready day and night. However, as I was saying, it is the personal element that history cannot catch.

‘I believe that I have been preserved to this late day in order to make the delegates at Paris realize that it was the personal element which wrecked the Holy Alliance. I never saw such a collection of rogues in my life. I remember, years afterwards, giving Cavour—who in my judgement was the greatest statesman that Europe ever produced, an Italian of the stock of Caius Caesar and Bonaparte—a list of the qualities and outward appearances that could make any reasonable person certain that those who are conferring with him are rogues, or, as the case may be, honest men. Cavour did not believe that the art of personal observation could in this way be reduced to a science. There he was wrong. The sun has spots. But I applied my tests in 1871 at Versailles, in 1878 at Berlin, in 1899 and 1907 at the Hague, and I never found them to fail. I knew the rogues and the fools in a moment. I remember telling Disraeli—but there, there, these are not matters for profane ears. Do not move. Restore

the bottle. This conversation has renewed my powers. Allow me, sir, to present you with this ring, which was given to me by Mme Mère shortly after her great son's death. I shall never forget her words. She said: "Napoleon was greater, milord, than you think. He wore this ring at Austerlitz. He would never have failed had he trusted people less, but if he had trusted them less he would never have been great. It is better to have been great and to have failed than to have been petty and to have succeeded." I am proposing to make that my text at the Conference. I think I will speak, after all. We need more greatness, more nobility, more faith.'

The old man lay down, and in a moment was asleep. At this instant the train drew up at a station, the light went out, and the trembling auditor slipped forth into the safety of the night.

SEPTEMBER SEASCAPES

JUST when people are leaving the sea for the inland towns the waters are taking on their most alluring aspect—wide, passionless, many-tinted spaces framed in headlands aglow with the glory of early autumn and bounded on the thither side with infinity. Summer-long there has been no twilight for ordinary folk, no quivering of the dawn for common mortals. But September has given it back to us, and evening peace.

The rare beauty of a September sea at dawn may be the reward of sleepless eyes. The heat of summer has gone, the equinox with its gales has not yet come, and a period of freshness linked with quietude lies upon sea and land. What a miracle is this thinning of the night! Some spirit breathes upon the star-crowned blackness, and it becomes something with a texture of its own, in which strange patterns appear; first a wreath of smoke from some early moving household, and then some shadowy tiled roofs that the casement looks on, and next, in the grey warp and woof of night, there looms a Norman church tower, and beyond it, with curious suddenness, a network of fields, where ill-proportioned beasts are grazing, and beyond them a hard, invariable line that cuts the sky beneath the stars. Paler and paler grow the garments of the night, and the line of the hills above white cliffs shines coldly and cleanly across vague distances, in which here and there a light winks. Then in a moment it is dawn, and the

updrawn drapery of the night reveals a little town set on the curving horns of a cliff-bound bay and a sea, ever more cerulean, whence the night-fishers are creeping home with set sails and cargoes of gleaming silver. 'Yonder is the sea,' and all that it means to home and happiness.

Turner, in one of his miraculous water-colour sketches, shows, with such parcimony of line and colour as no other seascape painter has exercised, the sea at noontide rest. At first the fragment of paper seems to contain nothing at all, but presently the full wonder of the thing appears. The creator has entered into the perspective of the gods. He has used neither wave nor cloud nor headland to give him his infinite pale distances moving swiftly and directly away from the beholder's eye. The mathematician writes and reasons about infinity; the poet, the singer, the musician feel it, suggest it, bathe in it; but the great painter created it and transferred his creation, by some brooding, subtle touch, to an immortal scrap of paper. The limitations of words are manifest; to the painter's brush there seem none. How true it is the common eye, that sound tester of art, may see here in this noontide moment. From this rocky nook all headlands, all beaches are shut out. There is sea only, and sky; and the blue sea is, in its infinite distances, almost as rippleless as the cloudless sky that bends to it and mingles with it. Far-off flecks of dancing foam, strong-winged gulls in cleaving flight, are perhaps the perspective makers, adding reality to the wavering, unreal line that registers the range of eyesight and seems to mark the mingling of blue air and blue water in the quiet, shimmering heat of the noonday sun riding at ease in the south.

But the evening seascape is nature's chief miracle.

Dawn, emerging like a goddess from the foam, leads on to common day. The noontide is a moment of repose from common toils. But the evening twilight thickening on the deep is a twilight of the gods. The sun has slid down the west, has stood for a beaming, wonderful moment triumphantly upon the flood, and then has hidden himself. Hidden in the chambers, hung with imperial purple, gilded with regal gold, shining with the snow that is as silver—hidden in the chambers of the west, he leaves behind him the mystery of his presence, and of quietude creeping along the broad places of the deep, and as it moves gathering to itself a mist, or veil, which it has drawn away from the faces of the stars. As the evening thickens on the grey-green deeps of the sea new lights appear in the violet wells of the heaven, and soon the September moon quenches with her amber rays the last reverberations of the long-set sun. The hand of man adds the last magic, as the lights of fishing-boats move quietly down the long lanes of the quiet sea, and somewhere in the distance someone cries, ' Good night ! '

A DANTE WITHOUT WORDS

Who does not enjoy a winter's afternoon up a lane and round a wood and on a moor does not deserve a summer's evening when it comes. Winter in the country about Christmas-time has wonders of its own that the winsomeness of spring and the comeliness of summer cannot match. It may, of course, be wet underfoot, but a properly accredited wayfarer has reckoned with that, and, gaitered and booted, heeds not the splash, but sees the glimmer of the early sunset up the long, winding road touching the little pools and irradiating the trees. The hill is worth conquering, for it is framed about with the tracery of naked trees. Despite the crispness of the air, it is worth while dallying to watch the patterns against the sky rising above the clean, naked trunks of the beech and the rugged, gnarled stems of oak and elm. The oak still has leaves to guard the multitudinous buds, but it is always unmistakable in shape with the little bunchy twigs sticking out in all directions, a sort of hairy tree spreading in gracious strength beneath the sky. It is more kindly than the elm, which is gaunt in the glow of sunset, and gives a touch of desolate romance, with its great arms held out in supplication. But it is not as gracious as the subtle larches, nor so tender as the bending silver birches, nor so proud as the great hornbeams, nor so fantastic as the beeches, with their roots creeping like grey serpents along the edges of the wood. But the oak is sturdier than them all, and stands in places

of its own here and there, as if to say, 'These others are my courtiers, my generals, my admirals, my daughters; but I am England, and have outstood the winds and storms of a thousand years.'

So a land of mystery stretches out on each side of the road, a shadowy land shot through with sunset rays, where fairies and goblins, witches and ghosts may be hovering on this late afternoon round the wayfarers on the road that winds uphill through the woodland right on to the billowy and still more mysterious upland, where elusive distances are touched by the light of a half-moon bending to the west, by the crimson bars of sunset that are waiting to welcome her, by the first lights in farmhouses and villages that tell the traveller of warm fires and story-telling hearths.

But who are these wayfarers who have sped up the hill, not on foot, but in a car bearing the familiar sign of the Red Cross; who have sped silently, with greedy, hungry eyes, drinking in at every bend and swerve of the way each detail of the beloved road? The car stops at the top of the hill, and one man gets out, wrings the hands of his fellows and of the driver, and walks off with hardly a word along a lonely path in the black heather where the car could not follow. All is silence, but there is still in his consciousness the ringing cheers of the folk in the little country town whence he has been driven up on to the moor. He is a thin, broken-looking man, holding himself as well as may be, and nerving himself for a supreme moment. He is not old, but he has the manners of age, an incertitude, hollow cheeks and strained eyes as he looks at the strong light still showing in the west. He straightens himself again and again, he mutters to himself, he recognizes the bark of a dog, the dog knows his step, there is a light shining

through a little screen of trees, there is the call of a familiar voice. And the man passes his hand over his forehead to find it wet with the passion of homecoming after years of waiting.

The Prisoner of War hears his wife saying to someone, 'Vather be here soon ; to-day, to-morrow—soon, soon. I did wait in town two days this week, one day last week, but they did zay to I, " Be patient. He be coming very soon." ' It was just across the hedge that she was speaking to the herdsman's wife, and he listened, wiping his forehead with his hand. ' You *be* patient. How long be it ? ' ' It be two year. I be patient.' Then he coughed, a deep, racking cough. He had come from the salt mines, and had little strength left. She said, ' What be that ; be that vather ? ' Then he stepped to the gate, and the light from the cottage door fell on the well-loved face, worn, thin, grim, but unconquerable. ' It *be* he,' said she. ' It be thy man,' said the herdsman's wife. ' I be come home,' said he. ' Be 'ee well, Mary ? Take me in to the hearth. I be tired wi' long ploughing this winter's day.'

The weary, distraught mind had forgotten captivity and gone back to the day's ploughing he had done before the evening when he had joined up and gone to the field of war. Leaning on his weeping wife, he passed into the cottage, and, sitting in the old chair by the fire, fell asleep like a child smiling in its dreams. And the children of the house crept in to look at him asleep, the man who had been in hell and had come back to tell the tale, a Dante without words.

EVERYMAN

Most walkers delay the taking of the road till April; but there is much to be said for earlier pilgrimages, for instance, at the end of February. No doubt winter is still fighting a rearguard action, and is still capable of terrible things, but the wind is tempered with hope, the turf by the roadside on the high lands springs under the foot, the southward-looking gorse grows full of gold, the long hedges are almost as purple as the heather will be, the elm-buds show colour, the earliest primrose is out in the woods, the sun is a harbinger of hope, and the moon a revealer of dreams.

So with satchel and ash-staff, gaiters, sound boots, and open eyes and ears, the pilgrim takes the road. With midday passed, the fascination of the way seems to grow as every new hour passes. The nakedness of the woods reveals the richness of the land where hundreds of acres of rich ploughed earth are variegated with great fields where the autumn wheat is green. The ploughman and the sower are still afield, and the straining horses, splendid in labour, as they wheel at the end of the furrow, where the birds are feeding in the new-turned brown earth, send out into the air great clouds of impatient breath. Wild life is astir. The hawks are busy, floating on strained wing, thinking out ways and means. They have months before them, since nesting time is not yet. But with most birds household needs are growing urgent, and the plover is looking

for suitable hoof-holes wherein to lay her two eggs, and the lark is soaring over the new green of the wheat-fields singing with perennial passion.

The moon, bending towards the full, is well up before the birds are thinking of rest, and strangely lengthens the lengthening day. The mingling of springtime-moonlight and failing sunlight is an approximation to the light that never shone on sea or land. The joy of the first spring-time is penetrated with a fine strain of sadness, of yearning for the intangible things of the soul, of hope for realities that transcend this earthly coil. And as the pilgrim tramps on, full of far thoughts, there comes up a grassy side-road a mysterious stranger ; part gipsy he looks, part tramp, with shining eyes. He greets the other gravely, looks at him piercingly, and passes on.

It was a casual, meaningless meeting, but it cast a thrill of something like fear through the heart of the walker, who was glad soon to see in the dusk the light of his appointed inn. A long day's walking, a sufficient meal, and a cosy turf fire brought early drowsiness ; but before he fell asleep he read again, as good Lenten travellers might well do, his *Everyman*, strange poem of an age when materialism and mysticism were as mingled as they are to-day, or as they are when the moon shines on the rich man's treasure.

Then, as so often happens, the mind half asleep began to combine the fifteenth-century book with the strange wayfarer who had passed him on the road. In a moment, as it were—for subtle and past comprehending is the working of the sub-conscious mind—the dreamer was on the road again, at the very point where he had met the tramp-gipsy. This time the stranger did not pass on his way, but, renewing his

grave salute, came close and said, 'Everyman! I am a messenger sent unto thee, and my name is Life'—not Death, as in the morality of the days of the Black Death. 'I am to bid thee to sell all that thou possessest, and to give it to the poor.' And the pilgrim was silent; but he smiled, for he was a man of few possessions and fewer needs. And Life said, 'And I am to bid thee to lay by the pride of fellowship, of kinship, of friendship, of strength, of intellectual power.' And the pilgrim was silent; for, though he loved these things, he laid no store by them. So he smiled again. Then Life said, 'And I am to bid thee to be unknown, unpraised, unloved, without fame in this generation.' And the pilgrim bowed his head; for he loved fame.

At last the two took the way together, and presently they came to a roadside crucifix, and Life pointed to it. 'And I am to bid thee crucify thyself. Canst thou do it?' The pilgrim cried aloud in his pain and his distress, and he wept bitterly. Then he realized with Whom he was walking, and in his heart determined to suffer all things.

